

**Many Voices, Few Listeners:  
an analysis of the dialogue between  
Islam and contemporary Europe.**

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The great International Relations theorist Hedley Bull once said, “thinking is research”. Considering this thesis has been relentlessly circulating within the inner recesses of my brain for the past fourteen months, whether sitting at my desk, running in the park or playing with my granddaughter, I hope he is right. I consider it a privilege to have been able to embark on this journey of self-discovery added and abetted by passionate academics whose generosity of time and encouragement has been appreciated, and by loyal friends and family who put up with my neglect of them.

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## **ABSTRACT.**

Enlargement of the European Union (EU) coupled with immigration and rising transnational flows of people has led to increased contact between different cultures, religions, ethnic groups and diverse languages. Historically, the reproduction of ethnic and racial bigotry from generation to generation has marred the European landscape. Cognisant of this, the EU is committed to the development of intercultural competences and the promotion of intercultural dialogue, involving not only public authorities but also civil society. As part of a strategy to build a cohesive integrated 'social Europe', the EU launched the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (EYID) at Ljubijana in Slovenia on January 8. Beneath the carapace of 'Unity in Diversity', the aim of EYID is to promote a better understanding of Europe's complex cultural environment in an effort to move beyond 'mere tolerance'. In recent years, however, increasing tensions involving Europe's Muslim population have been exacerbated by their visible difference, youth riots, terrorism and the current global discourse of "clash". Considering that Europe's largest ethnic minority is Muslim, any attempt to foster tolerance through intercultural dialogue could be severely limited by Europe's ability to sustain a meaningful dialogue with Islam.

Thus, this thesis focuses specifically on dialogue with Islam in contemporary Europe. Its aim is to contribute to the present discussion concerning the perceived need for policy makers and citizens to redefine the space/identity allocated to Europe's Muslim population. Beginning with a brief history of Muslim immigration to Europe this dissertation then analyses the marginalisation of these immigrants by the development of institutionalised inequalities. Pursuant to this is an examination of the scholarly debate surrounding the phenomenon of a nascent 'European identity' and its compatibility, to an equally embryonic 'Euro-Muslim identity'. Using EYID as a tool, this treatise then examines the themes reflected in academic discourse, which emerged from the EU level debates in relation to the acceptance of Europe's minorities. As Europe attempts to rethink a broader identity by accepting that immigrants are no longer sojourners but a necessary part of Europe's future, this thesis asks, how meaningful was the EYID to the discourse between Europe's Muslims and European leaders, policy makers, and civil society?

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.**

BBC.....	British Broadcasting Corporation
CFCM.....	Council of the Muslim Faith
CMBI.....	Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia
CRE.....	Commission for Racial Equality
CSC.....	Church and Society Commission
EC.....	Economic Community
ECF.....	European Cultural Foundation
ECHR.....	European Charter of Human Rights
ECSC.....	European Coal and Steel Community
EEC.....	European Economic Community
EFAH.....	European Forum for Arts and Heritage
ENAR.....	European Network Against Racism
EPAs.....	European Partnership Agreements
EU.....	European Union
EUMC.....	European Monitoring Centre for Racism and Xenophobia
EUNIC.....	European Union National Institute of Culture
EURO 88.....	EURO Barometer
EYID.....	European Year of Intercultural Dialogue
FRA.....	Fundamental Rights Agency
GMF02.....	German Probability Phone Study
ICM.....	ICM Research Centre
MDGs.....	Millennium Development Goals
MEP.....	Member of the European Parliament
MFP.....	Mouvement pour la France

SEA.....	Single European Act
ToA.....	Treaty of Amsterdam
UK.....	United Kingdom
UN.....	United Nations
UNESCO.....	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
YFJ.....	European Youth Forum
WW I.....	World War One
WW II.....	World War Two

The battle for the hearts and soul of Islam today is taking place between moderates and fanatics, between democrats and dictators, between those who live in the past and those who adapt to the present and plan for a better future. In the resolution of this conflict may in fact lie the direction of international peace in the twenty-first century. (Benazir Bhutto, 2008:19-20)



# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION.**

On the cusp of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, worldwide concern over a ‘clash’ between civilisations colours perceptions, relationships and policies at an international, national, and civic level in European Union (EU) nations.<sup>1</sup> Fears of a clash with Islam in Europe are increasing, fuelled by terrorist attacks, racism and Islamophobic tendencies across member states. In response to this escalation of disquiet is a call for tolerance, for mutual understanding, and for the need to deepen communication through intercultural dialogue. Beset by a troubled history concerning its Muslim minorities, the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (EYID) offered the EU an opportunity to play a pivotal role in promoting peace through a dialogue with Islam. Intercultural dialogue has the potential to be an important mechanism in the toolbox of integration for Europe’s Muslim population, and if supported by political and civic will, it may also be instrumental in helping a new generation of Euro-Muslims shape a pluralistic Islam – an Islam, compatible with western democracy.

The European Union is an unparalleled experiment, a unique polity, which in a mere fifty years has united 27 nations, both politically and economically, bringing peace to an area long divided by internecine wars. It has also emerged as a developing actor (civilian, political and military) on the international stage, promoting normative power and human rights.<sup>2</sup> The EU now seeks to reinforce its sui generis nature in the socio-cultural sphere, adopting the motto ‘Unity in Diversity’ to promote its multi-cultural essence. Not only is the EU the first polity to weld previous adversarial nation-states together in a successful political and economic union, but by promoting a ‘European identity’ it is also the first to attempt a union between multiple ethnicities and multiple post-modern identities, constantly fragmented by the forces of globalisation.

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<sup>1</sup>See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004).

<sup>2</sup> See Mario Telò, *Europe, a civilian power?: European Union, global governance, world order* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006). Charlotte Bretherton, & John Volger, *The European Union as a Global Actor* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2006).

Unity in Diversity, however, may be an exigent paradox for the EU especially in relation to Europe's Muslim population. Ethnically, culturally, and religiously different, Muslims can be seen to expose Europe's longstanding inability to accept minority groups. Moreover, historically Western European identities based on Judeo-Christian theologies have been constructed in opposition to Christianity's archetypal 'other' - Islam. With 15 million Muslims resident in the EU, and the increasing visibility of Muslims within Europe due to ongoing conflicts, the biggest challenge to establish 'unity' will be in the socio-cultural accommodation of Islam.<sup>3</sup> Despite the EU's strong political vision, its social vision remains obfuscated and inconsistent and throughout Europe, Muslim populations are now forcing a re-conceptualisation of European identity by challenging age-old religious, political and secular paradigms. Not only are Muslims challenging the visible socio-cultural landscape, but they are also challenging core European norms and values by demanding recognition. Charles Taylor writes that modernity has brought with it not so much a "need for recognition but the conditions in which the attempt to be recognised can fail".<sup>4</sup> Considering that failure leads to conflict, 'recognition' is crucial to the future stability of Europe's social fabric, and the accommodation of Muslims in Europe rests not only on the recognition of Islam as a European religion but also on the fact that Muslims are both a separate ethno-cultural group and that they are Europeans too.

Aware of the increasing need to build a cohesive 'social Europe', the EU launched the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue at Ljubijana in Slovenia on January 8. Beneath the umbrella of the European Commission's Agenda for Culture in a Globalised World (2007), the aim of EYID was to promote a better understanding of Europe's complex cultural environment<sup>5</sup>. Through a series of events at the EU, national, and municipal levels, involving art, debates, theatre, exhibitions and inter-religious dialogue, the EU institutions hoped to forge closer links between all

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<sup>3</sup>Due to a lack of accurate statistics, this figure represents a rough estimate and it refers to all Muslim cultures rather than practising Muslims in the religious sense. Samir Amghar, Amel Boubekeur and Michael Emerson, eds. *European Islam: Challenges for Society and Public Policy* (Brussels, Centre for European Policy Studies, 2007), 1 (footnote).

<sup>4</sup> Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. Amy Gutman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 35.

<sup>5</sup> In May 2007, the Commission proposed an agenda for Culture (com/2007/0242) founded on three sets of objectives: cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue; culture as a catalyst for creativity; and culture as a key in international relations. [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-policy-development/doc399\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-policy-development/doc399_en.htm)

European peoples and their respective cultures, including Islam. Considering that, as scholars argue, it is the marginalisation and exclusion of Europe's Muslims that leads to conflict rather than inherent cultural differences, inter-religious and intercultural discourse could well be vital to a better understanding of the Euro/Islam debate, and to determining a socio-cultural vision for Europe's future.<sup>6</sup> Not only are Muslim immigrants crucial to Europe's continuing economic growth, as Europe's population is depleted by both falling birth rates and aging population, but recent terrorist attacks worldwide, mean that the importance of creating open channels of communication between diverse cultural identities to the 21<sup>st</sup> century cannot be underestimated. The EU, thus, has a central role to play in accommodating Islam in Europe, and the way in which European leaders and society handle the problems resulting from a rapidly rising Muslim population could well shape not only Europe's future but also "the geopolitics of the Middle East and Islam's response to the challenge of modernity"<sup>7</sup>.

The West and zealous Islamic leaders routinely portray Islam as a single monolithic entity, an immutable religion that promotes absolute adherence to a rigid dogma, leading to the perception that Islam is not compatible with a pluralistic society.<sup>8</sup> However, although the teachings of Islam provide precise laws regarding religious ritual, from which no deviation is allowed, as far as political and social matters are concerned there is room for *ijtihad*, creative elucidation.<sup>9</sup> *Ijtihad* (reason) is stirring and there is evidence of a fresh wind blowing across Western Europe heralding a new generation of Muslim elites who are active in all levels of European society - civic and national - and have the ability to influence policymakers and leaders.<sup>10</sup> Alongside this vanguard are third and fourth-generation immigrants, who support integration and are in the process of developing de-ethnicised European-Muslim identities relative to their country of residence.

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<sup>6</sup> Thomas Meyer, *Identity Mania: Fundamentalism and the Politicalization of Cultural Differences* (London: Zed Books, 2001), 50.

<sup>7</sup> Joseph Camilleri, "Europe between Islam and the United States: interests, identity and geopolitics", *Global Change, Peace & Security* 20, no. 1, (2008): 9.

<sup>8</sup> Karen Armstrong, "We cannot afford to maintain these ancient prejudices against Islam" *The Guardian*, September 18, 2006.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2006/sep/18/religion.catholicism>

<sup>9</sup> Jytte Klausen, *The Islamic Challenge: Politics and Religion in Western Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 9.

<sup>10</sup> Klausen, 28.

Europe too is undergoing a crisis of identity as it seeks to promote ‘unity in diversity’ At present accord remains elusive, for unity relies on the imagination of a new ‘European identity’ that can correlatively accommodate Europe’s many minorities including Islam. Since belonging is rooted in identity, and identity, ultimately, constructed in opposition, the challenge for the EU is to create a ‘common identity’ based on a mutually inclusive dialogue that enables a ‘self’ identification with the ‘other’. The challenge is to create a ‘homeland’ in which a sense of belonging is not boundary driven but is open to all of the EU’s inhabitants regardless of ethnicity, religion and colour. Accompanying the embryonic renaissance in Islam, there is also evidence of an emerging cosmopolitan identity “neither emotional, nor passionate” that is “founded less on memory than on reason”, which is more tolerant of cultural diversity.<sup>11</sup> Cosmopolitanism allows for the accommodation of both the individual and the other by resolving the language of confrontation and suspicion through commonality and dialogue. It diminishes the emphasis on cultural homogeneity by favouring diversity through a plurality of ethnicities, religions and lifestyles. Whether cosmopolitanism will guide the development of a more integrated ‘social Europe’ or not, remains to be seen but in order to prevent Europe from becoming an impossible project, ‘Intercultural Dialogue’ based on *ijtihad*, could well be crucial to the acculturation of difference and to any multi-societal identity formation.

## THESIS STRUCTURE.

The remainder of this chapter outlines the methodology and the literature review. Chapter two provides a brief history of Muslim immigration to Europe and an analysis of the marginalisation of these immigrants by the development of institutionalised inequalities. Subsequent chapters examine the scholarly debate surrounding the phenomenon of ‘identity’, in relation to the concept of a nascent ‘European identity’ and its compatibility to an emerging ‘Euro-Muslim identity’. Using EYID as a tool, this treatise then seeks to analyse the themes emerging in the EU level debates and effectiveness of intercultural dialogue as a tool for changing the perceptions of Europe towards its Muslim communities.

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<sup>11</sup> Dominique Schnapper, “Memory and Identity in the Age of the European Construction” in *Identity and Memory*, eds. Dominique Schnapper and others (Paris: CulturesFrance, 2007), 16.

## **Chapter 2. – Historical Barriers to Dialogue.**

Ethnic tensions and cultural clashes still mar the integration story in the EU. Racism and discrimination fuelled by age-old xenophobic tendencies and institutionalised inequalities directed against minorities and immigrants contribute to the failure of multiculturalism and integration policies in Europe. This chapter provides a historical and political background to some of these institutionalised inequalities by examining socio-economic and socio-cultural factors, including human rights. This section also examines the role of intercultural dialogue as a means to address these discriminatory practices. In the light of recent ‘clash’ theories, it also situates the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue within the global debate on a dialogue between civilizations. The pertinent question being, is intercultural dialogue enough?

## **Chapter 3. – European Identity.**

Given the ethnic tensions throughout the member states, the challenge for the EU in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to create a ‘common identity’ based on a mutually inclusive dialogue that enables a ‘self’ identification with the ‘other’. This chapter begins with a brief examination of the primordialist versus constructivist debate concerning the theoretical structure of identity. It then traces the formation of collective identity as constructed by the nation-state and the affect of collective identities on Europe’s minority cultures. Thirdly, this section examines the idea of an identity ‘crisis’ brought about by the de-centring affects of globalisation, followed by an analysis of the argument for a cosmopolitan European identity, and the role of the EU as an identity builder. Cosmopolitan or not, is it possible for the EU to develop a European identity that transcends not only national borders, but the more difficult borders of colour, difference and otherness, thereby consolidating a meaningful ‘unity’ within the ‘diversity’?

## **Chapter 4. – Muslim Identity.**

There is a tendency for European fears in relation to immigration and cultural diversity to be particularly weighted against Europe’s Muslim population. This preoccupation derives from a perception that Muslims are making unreasonable

demands culturally, politically, and theologically. This chapter analyses the role of Islam in Europe in relation to Muslim identity. It returns to the previously mentioned primordialist/constructivist debate, again arguing for a constructivist approach. Secondly, it analyses the 'space' allotted to Muslim immigrants by receiving states (using Britain, France and Germany as examples), and how their welcome or the lack thereof, affected identity construction. This chapter also discusses how the effects of globalisation, the terrorist threat in Europe and the perception of an 'Islam in crisis' affects the construction of Muslim identity in Europe. Is a crisis in Islam the cause of ongoing conflicts involving Europe's Muslims, or is it the underlying tension driven by socio-economics and increasing marginalisation? Is Islam, in fact, a threat to European identity or is there evidence of a new embryonic Muslim identity in Europe that is compatible with a pluralistic society?

## **Chapter 5. – Many Voices, Few Listeners.**

Intercultural dialogue is more than just syllables. It is not only a process but it is also an ethos, a journey and an opportunity for change. An analysis of the themes emerging in the seven EU level debates held throughout the 2008 year in Brussels can provide insight into the contemporary discourse in Europe regarding the integration of its ethnic minorities, including Muslims, through the medium of intercultural dialogue.

The topics covered are:

1. "Integrating Conversations: The Impact of Migration on Intercultural Dialogue".
2. "Negotiating Differences: A Responsibility of Artists and Cultural Institutions".
3. "New Horizons: Active Citizenship to Bridge Inter-religious Divides".
4. "Couscous Culture: is that what Intercultural Dialogue in the workplace is all about?"
5. "Multilingualism: A Bridge or Barrier for Intercultural Dialogue?"
6. "Education: Ready for the Intercultural Exchange?"
7. "Talking Our Way Out of Trouble: How Media Debate Can Combat Intolerance".

## Chapter 6. – Whispers of Change?

Typically, when cultural difference is experienced through arts, cuisine, fashion, dance, drama and music, it is exciting and enthralling, and thus, can create a real appreciation of other ethnicities. Legitimacy and visibility go hand in hand. Visibility of Europe's varied cultures, not only in local communities but also in art galleries, in craft and fashion stores, in restaurants, in the media, on the radio and in television programmes may well result in a legitimisation of their role in the multi-cultural patchwork that constitutes Europe.

Despite this positive affect, however, serious questions remain. How can 'Intercultural flavoured coffee' help disaffected youth living in the *banlieues* in France? What good is promoting understanding if one partner in the dialogue is unemployed, living in substandard housing, with children who are not performing well at school? How can intercultural dialogue address the serious problems of institutionalised and societal discrimination that exists in the EU today? Can intercultural dialogue facilitate a deeper discourse between the new Muslim elite and EU leaders and policy makers, thus helping bridge the Euro/Islam divide? This chapter attempts to answer these questions and suggest areas for further research in a discourse that remains significant to Europe's future.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

This thesis focuses specifically on dialogue with Islam. Its aim is to contribute to the present discussion concerning the perceived need for policy makers and citizens alike to redefine the space/identity allocated to Europe's Muslim population. It also contributes to the existing debate regarding a 'pan-European identity' and more specifically the role of Islam within this dialogue. The principal argument being that for societal unity to become a reality in the EU, any 'European identity' must provide a carapace for its chorus of multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-political voices - especially the voice of Islam. As Europe's traditional 'other', however, compounded in recent years by the increase in terrorism, it is possible that institutionalised disparities and Islamophobic tendencies will continue to disadvantage Europe's

Muslims, by refusing to recognise that Islam is now a European religion and that Muslims are Europeans too. An analysis of the discourse in the seven EU level debates during the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, as a valuable medium for promoting the dissolution of difference and the integration of Muslims in the EU, completes this thesis.

The research question motivating this enquiry is:

As the EU struggles to promote the concept of a ‘social Europe’ and a ‘European identity’, what themes emerged in the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue debates and how can they facilitate meaningful channels of communication between Islam and contemporary Europe?

The following sub-questions guide this treatise:

- 1) How vital is intercultural dialogue to the integration of Muslims in Europe?
- 2) Can a European identity accommodate Islam?
- 3) Is a Muslim identity compatible with a European identity?
- 4) Can EYID promote a better understanding of Islam in Europe, thus contributing to the development of policies and practices that will aid the integration process?

The issues explored in this paper cut across several disciplines and theoretical frameworks encompassing historical, political, sociological, psychological, cultural and religious concepts, including the effects of globalisation, necessitating the adoption of a multi-layered analysis. The methodology firstly involves a statement of validity, followed by an explanation of the terminology used in this thesis. As well as providing an English translation for French, German and Arabic words, this section explains the rationale for using certain terms, the meanings of which overtime are sometimes subject to confusion. It also sets the parameters for the debate on identity formation, which is a vast, complex topic and worthy of a whole thesis in itself. The limitations and the literature review complete this section on methodology.



This approach is primarily literature based involving the use of materials held in the University of Canterbury Library along with the location of scholarly journals through generic and dedicated EU databases. The European Union internet portal [www.europa.eu.int](http://www.europa.eu.int) was invaluable for accessing official documents, the Eurobarometer polls and the European Parliamentary debates. The EYID specific portal [www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu](http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu) provided a comprehensive coverage of the events and debates held during the year. The video-recorded EU debates in Brussels along with the briefing papers pre and post debate, provided data by which to follow the recurring themes upon which the process of intercultural dialogue rests.

### **Validity.**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the ‘clash’ school of thought is widely accepted throughout Europe bequeathing “every conflict between Muslims and the West with moral purpose.”<sup>12</sup> ‘Clash’ terminology dominates academic discourse and media coverage. Worldwide conflict involving Islam adds urgency to the need to open up reciprocal channels of communication, and in this respect, the EU could play a vital role. With a population of 15 million Muslims, legally resident throughout the member states, it is becoming increasingly urgent for the EU to resolve internal conflicts that have hindered the integration process in recent years. Rather than attempting to ‘contain Islam’ or to promote a moderate European style of Islam, is it possible for EU leaders and policy makers to work together with Muslims to provide structures that will allow Islam to evolve at its own pace? Aside from benefitting Europe, the natural emergence of a ‘Euro-Islam’ compatible with western democracy would undoubtedly have international repercussions. The validity of this paper also rests on the concern that unresolved problems associated with integration may increase because in some member states, the Muslim population is growing faster than the ‘native’ populace. Given its aging population, Europe may well continue to depend on Muslim immigrants to build its future labour force and, given the failure of multiculturalism and assimilation policies, it is possible that ethnic conflicts involving Muslims will continue throughout the member states. While the EU has mapped out its future economically and politically, is there a parallel socio-cultural vision for Europe’s future? How pivotal is intercultural dialogue to this process of evolution?

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<sup>12</sup> Klausen, 130.

### **Terminology.**

Language, though the dominant form of communication often requires explanation. Thus, this section clarifies meanings of terms, which through constant usage can take on subtle yet important differences. The term **Europe**, for example, requires careful delimitation because it has many guises – geographical, social, political and as a source of identification – to name a few. For the purposes of this paper, I am taking the liberty of using it in an extremely minimalist role, solely as a descriptor interchangeable with the term **EU**. Wherever the term Europe is used, it means the physical and psychosocial area comprising the member states of the European Union.

The idiom **identity** conjures up a myriad of theoretical frameworks and contexts. It is beyond the word limit and focus of this thesis to explore this complex topic in depth and indeed a veritable library of scholarly thought exists on the many guises of identity, in the psychological, sociological and political realms. Suffice to say, this exposition briefly examines identity theories purely to formulate an understanding of the experience of Europeans and Muslims in Europe, who exist in a constantly evolving multi-ethnic environment, where the only certainty is change.

**Multiculturalism** and **multicultural** are other debated terms, which require contextualization as the prolific and universal use of ‘multiculturalism’ and ‘multicultural’ has muddled academic discourse. Though multiculturalism, as a political and social theory, is a relatively recent phenomenon, as Bhikhu Parekh notes, “[M]ulticulturalism is not a homogenous body of thought”.<sup>13</sup> Rather, as Homi Bhabha wrote in 1998, multiculturalism has become a “portmanteau term for anything from minority discourse to postcolonial critique”.<sup>14</sup> For some, it is a single political doctrine, whereas for others the significance of multiculturalism is a strongly contested concept that can be both, a uniting and/or dividing force.<sup>15</sup> For the purposes of this discussion, it is useful to adopt Stuart Hall’s distinctions for these terms. Using multicultural as an adjective, it describes:

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<sup>13</sup> Bhikhu Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 349.

<sup>14</sup> Homi Bhabha, ‘Culture’s in Between’, in *Multicultural States – Rethinking Difference and Identity*, ed. D. Bennett (London: Routledge, 1998), 31.

<sup>15</sup> Gilles Kepel, *The War for Muslims Minds: Islam and the West* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2004), 245.

the social characteristics and problems of governance posed by any society in which different cultural communities live together and attempt to build a common life while retaining something of their 'original' identity. By contrast, 'multiculturalism' is substantive. It references the strategies and policies adopted to govern or manage the problems of diversity and multiplicity which multicultural societies throw up.<sup>16</sup>

It is difficult to specifically quantify or qualify the term **Muslim** in a European sense due to the practices of several member states refusing to gather accurate statistics regarding religious affiliation and ethnicity. Similarly, there are no statistics on the numbers of Muslims who practice Islam, or on those who have converted to Islam. At best, estimates rely on immigration statistics from Islamic countries but even these figures are dated.<sup>17</sup> The number, of 15 million used in this thesis is taken from the 2007, publication by the Centre for European Policy Studies and as noted in the introduction it uses the term Muslim as a cultural identification.<sup>18</sup> Jorgen Nielsen noted in 1995 that his book, like others on Muslims in Europe, operates "on the assumption that anyone who comes from a Muslim cultural background and is not explicitly Christian, or some other non-Muslim religion, is Muslim"<sup>19</sup>. However, while acknowledging this weakness, Nielsen justifies this blanket definition because for all immigrants of Muslim origin Islam is an important "option of personal identity and social belonging" and is therefore a valid signifier for "all those who share a Muslim cultural heritage".<sup>20</sup> In this thesis, the term Muslim is also a blanket term, to denote the immigrants and their families of Islamic descent who have made Europe their home, as well as those who have chosen to identify themselves as followers of Islam.

The idiom **Intercultural dialogue**, as used in this exposition, is more than just verbal communication between individuals, groups and organizations from diverse cultural backgrounds. It is also an ethos, an attitude and a journey. A study prepared by the European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research for the European Commission

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<sup>16</sup> Stuart Hall, "Conclusion: the Multi-cultural Question" in *Un/settled Multiculturalisms: Diaspora, Entanglements, Transruptions*, ed. Barnor Hesse (London: Zed Books, 2000), 209.

<sup>17</sup> For further statistics (end of 1990s) on a per country basis see Cesari, Jocelyne, *When Islam and Democracy Meet: Muslims in Europe and in the United States* (New York: Palgrave and MacMillan, 2004) Appendix I.

<sup>18</sup> Samir Amghar, Amel Boubekeur, and Michael Emerson, eds. *European Islam: Challenges for Society and Public Policy* (Brussels, Centre for European Policy Studies, 2007), 1.

<sup>19</sup> Jorgen Nielsen, *Muslims in Western Europe*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), 170.

<sup>20</sup> Nielsen, 171.

released in March 2008 qualifies intercultural dialogue as a process, the aim of which is to:

develop a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives and practices; to increase participation and the freedom and ability to make choices; to foster equality; and to enhance creative processes.<sup>21</sup>

This thesis maintains, therefore, that intercultural dialogue is a fundamental key to the formation and implementation of immigration policies and for the accommodation of different ethnic minorities in Europe. Intercultural dialogue is also fundamental to any debate on European identity.

### **French, German and Arabic Words.**

*Banlieues* – lower socio-economic suburbs in France inhabited mainly by Muslims.

*Bricolage* – a consortium made up of whatever is at hand.

*Burqa* – female Muslim clothing covering from head to toe, including the face.

*Dar-al-harb* – Land of war.

*Darura* – necessity.

*Gastarbeiter* – immigrant guest workers in Germany.

*Hadiths* – scholarly treatises recording the traditions of the prophets.

*Halal* – the process of slaughtering animals according to the religious law of Islam.

*Hijab* – Muslim headscarf.

*Ijtihad* – reason.

*Imam* – Muslim religious leader and teacher.

*Islamophobia* – a morbid fear of Islam and Muslims.

*Jus sanguinis* – bloodline.

*Jus solis* – of the soil as in birthright.

*Laïcité* – the strict separation between church and state legalised in France in 1908.

*Madrasses* – Muslim religious schools.

*Mutaghayyir* – subject to change.

*Qu'ran* – Holy Book of Islam.

*Sharia* – Islamic law.

*Thabit* – unchangeable.

*Umma* – worldwide community of Muslims.

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<sup>21</sup> ERICarts: Sharing Diversity, 2008 (Executive Summary), 12. <http://www.ericarts.org>

## **Limitations.**

This study does not present any new empirical data on the challenges that integration poses, both on the street or in the political corridors of member states. As a primarily literature based thesis, future research into the acculturation of difference and the accommodation of Muslims in Europe would undoubtedly be enhanced by in-depth interviews with Muslim leaders and EU policy makers, as well as with the subjects of this thesis who live with conflicting identities on a daily basis. A comprehensive and in depth analysis of every activity organized under EYID is also beyond the scope of this thesis in both volume and time scale. Therefore, it will be limited to a synopsis of intercultural and inter-religious dialogue with Islam through the framework of the seven EU level debates held in Brussels during 2008.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW.**

The literature review summarises the theoretical paradigms relevant to identity formation of Muslim immigrants and ‘native Europeans’ in the European Union. Identification indices, from nationalism to globalisation, cross multiple disciplines, and contemporary academic debates on a new emerging pan-European identity remain strongly contested. Similarly, theories on a budding Euro-Muslim identity are open to various academic interpretations. This thesis situates these hypotheses into the larger debate on the accommodation of Muslim immigrants and their families in the EU, through the prism of intercultural dialogue.

The new hermeneutics of intercultural dialogue are vital to perspective and identity and to the problems associated with socio-cultural integration. In the past decade intercultural dialogue, as a ‘paradigm for peace’ – at both a national and international level - is the moderators answer to the discourse of clash.<sup>22</sup> Samuel P. Huntington’s ‘clash of civilizations’ theory continues to attract a strong rebuttal, as scholars like Jytte Klausen, refute the link to civilizations by arguing that, “domestic conflicts have

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<sup>22</sup> See President Mohammad Khatami’s *Dialogue Among Civilizations: A Paradigm for Peace*, eds. Theo Bekker and Joellen Pretorius (Pretoria: Unit for Policy Studies, University of Pretoria, 2001).

local causes”.<sup>23</sup> Though local, these causes often have ancient roots meaning that if intercultural dialogue is to be effective it cannot “happen in a vacuum”.<sup>24</sup> As Bhikhu Parekh writes, intercultural dialogue has a “historical dimension” involving the “exchange of memories and a better understanding of the past”, as well as being reliant on the provision of equal social opportunities.<sup>25</sup> The 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue provided an occasion for member states to move beyond mere tolerance and to explore the therapeutic qualities of the dialogic process. The former President of Iran, Mohammed Khatami, argues that the purpose of dialogue is to trigger a “paradigm shift away from violence...and cross-cultural misunderstandings.”<sup>26</sup> The problem with dialogue, however, as civil society leaders like Bashy Quarishy, President of the European Network Against Racism, (ENAR) contend, is that, historically, dialogue has been little more than a majority controlled monologue, rather than a reciprocal engagement between equals.<sup>27</sup> Quarishy also raised the concern that EYID could be reduced to just another “symbolic gesture” like the previous 2007 Year of Equal Opportunities.<sup>28</sup> In contrast to these concerns, a European Commission report promoted intercultural dialogue as a catalyst and a process that would “increase participation and...freedom” to make choices, for those previously denied a voice.<sup>29</sup>

EYID also provided an opportunity for a reassessment of ‘European identity’. Any mention of identity must necessarily involve an analysis of the primordialist versus constructivist debate. Stuart Hall posits that primordialists are convinced identity is a ‘fixed inner core’ that emerges at birth and remains essentially the same throughout a person’s life.<sup>30</sup> Constructivists, on the other hand, as Christina Chimisso writes, see identities as relational and always incomplete – constructing meaning through

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<sup>23</sup> Klausen, 4.

<sup>24</sup> Bashy Quraishy, Brussels Debate One. Integrating Conversations: The Impact of Migration on Intercultural Dialogue. <http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu/962.0.html>

<sup>25</sup> Bhikhu Parekh, *A New Politics of Identity: Political Principles for an Interdependent World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 170.

<sup>26</sup> Khatami, [http://www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/2006/webArticles/102006\\_Khatami.htm](http://www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/2006/webArticles/102006_Khatami.htm)

<sup>27</sup> Teresa Kücher, EU Observer, Frattini promotes intercultural dialogue against radicalisation’ (07/03/08). <http://euobserver.com/879/25789>

<sup>28</sup> Teresa Kücher, EU Observer, ‘Anti-racism NGOs say intercultural dialogue money not well spent’ (31/03/08). <http://euobserver.com/879/25865>

<sup>29</sup> ERICarts: Sharing Diversity, 2008 (Executive Summary), p. 12. <http://www.ericarts.org>

<sup>30</sup> Stuart Hall, “The Question of Cultural Identity”, in *Modernity and its Futures*, eds. Stuart Hall, David Held and Tony McGrew (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 275.

experience.<sup>31</sup> This thesis argues from a constructivist perspective, agreeing with Thomas Meyer who observes that identity “is not a possession but a social process” that evolves through group interaction.<sup>32</sup> Thus, a constructivist approach allows for change, for growth, for acceptance of difference, and for dialogue. It allows European identities to be formed and reformed, through daily interaction in the crucible of community.

Identity is rooted in belonging, and without this sense of belonging, human life is meaningless. Benedict Anderson’s theory of ‘imagined communities’ is useful to explore how cultures create a sense of community in order to fulfil this need of belonging – communities, which, in Europe, have often entrenched the European state perspective at the expense of the ‘other’ in their midst.<sup>33</sup> For Anderson a political community exists only if legitimated by its people resulting in the phenomena of nation-ness. Nation-ness or nationalism, however, is always constructed in opposition to those outside, resulting in discrimination and exclusion. As Julia Kristeva posits, ‘national identity crises’ exacerbate the “ups and downs of identity struggle” and nationalism becomes a ‘hate reaction’, which rejects those outside the nation-state.<sup>34</sup> According to Will Kymlicka, nationalism also discriminates against those inside a nation’s borders because the ‘inescapably national dimension’ of political life naturally favours the majority.<sup>35</sup> Thus, Europe’s minorities have often suffered at the hands of nationalism. A nationalism, which, as Ulrich Beck argues, “denies the empirical reality of Europe” because for centuries Europe has been a multi-ethnic society just as the individual nation-states themselves have always been multi-ethnic.<sup>36</sup>

Convinced that nationalism is here to stay, however, Kristeva, contends for the need to transcend nationalism by embracing a tolerance and commonality based on

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<sup>31</sup> Cristina Chimisso, “What is Identity?” in *Exploring European Identities*, ed. Cristina Chimisso (London: The Open University, 2003), 40.

<sup>32</sup> Meyer, *Identity Mania*, 15.

<sup>33</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 6.

<sup>34</sup> Julia Kristeva, *Nations Without Nationalism*, translated by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 1-2.

<sup>35</sup> Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 194.

<sup>36</sup> Ulrich Beck, “Understanding The Real Europe: A Cosmopolitan Vision,” in *Diversity and Culture*, ed. Julia Kristeva (Paris: CulturesFrance, c2007), 41.

Montesquieu's *esprit general* in order to fuse together the individual and the 'other' without erasing the borders of nationalism.<sup>37</sup> Like Kristeva, Beck argues for a cosmopolitanism that aims for the '*recognition of difference*' rather than denial or dissolution.<sup>38</sup> Philip Schlesinger, on the other hand believes that a European "cosmopolitan space that allows an escape from the prison-house of nationalism" is at present only a 'temptation'.<sup>39</sup> Schlesinger reasons that it is the lack of public confidence in a collective European space, which prevents the development of a pan-European cosmopolitan identity. Since belonging and commitment are reciprocal, citizens need to feel a sense of commitment from their political institutions in order to develop a sense of belonging and at present commitment seems weak. Martha Nussbaum, who argues that ethnic, religious and social conflicts throughout Europe continue to endanger the spirit of cosmopolitanism, also questions Europe's readiness for a cosmopolitan identity.<sup>40</sup> While it may be premature to advocate cosmopolitanism, there are concerns over Europe's emerging 'fortress' image. Exclusionary immigration practices resulting in the marginalisation of those who Ian Ward calls 'other Europeans' are, according to Ward, in danger of breaching Community and International law.<sup>41</sup> Jürgen Habermas echoes Wards concerns by arguing that Europe is in danger of attempting to provide a mandate for a "privileged *cultural* life form" through its restrictive immigration policies that seek to protect the nation state.<sup>42</sup> Although nationalism remains as the main source of identification, it is under threat not only from those who advocate liberal immigration policies but also by the effects of globalisation.

Globalisation has severely strained the customary indices of identification through the increasing mobility and interaction of different cultures, which is simultaneously challenging traditional ethnic, religious and national identities. As people suffer a sense of dislocation caused by globalisation, Christopher Lasch argues that postmodern people find themselves in a disposable world, where identities are

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<sup>37</sup> Kristeva, 28-31.

<sup>38</sup> Beck, 29.

<sup>39</sup> Philip Schlesinger, "A Cosmopolitan Temptation," *European Journal of Communication* 22, (2007): 415. <http://ejc.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/22/4/413>

<sup>40</sup> Nussbaum, Martha, C., "Kant and Stoic Cosmopolitanism" in *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 5, no.1 (1997): 24.

<sup>41</sup> Ian Ward, "Law and the Other Europeans", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 35, no. 1 (1997): 79.

<sup>42</sup> Jürgen Habermas, "Citizenship and national identity: Some Reflections on the Future of Europe," *Praxis International* 12, no.1 (1992): 17.



appropriated and discarded at will.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, 'belonging' and 'identity' are no longer secure and hence, as Zygmunt Bauman comments, where once the nation-state offered a 'modicum of security for its own', liquid modernity challenges old identifications for all.<sup>44</sup> This has a particular affect on immigrants because as Manuel Castells argues, identity disruption through globalisation leads to the development of resistance identities that "function as refuge and solidarity, to protect against a hostile, outside world".<sup>45</sup> As immigrants and minorities seek to redefine their identities within their adopted homelands, they find themselves in what Bo Strath describes as a 'double danger' of either "falling in between two cultures...[or] falling into the abysses of modernity" forever without a 'home'.<sup>46</sup> Thus, globalisation has resulted in the fragmentation of identities, especially for Muslims attempting to redefine themselves in a Western environment. Bassam Tibi's theory on 'societal change' is useful therefore, to explain the difficulties Muslims face in accommodating the "rapid social change" occurring in their societies and in their attempt to redefine their identities in the West.<sup>47</sup> While globalisation had a homogenising effect on communication, transport, economies and political structures, it has not resulted in a universalism of values, norms and worldviews.<sup>48</sup> Rather, as Tibi argues, globalisation has resulted in a cultural fragmentation bringing Islam to a crossroads. Olivier Roy also supports the fact, that Muslims are facing a dilemma in their faith. He maintains that some Muslims are choosing to adapt Islam to life in secular countries like France, while others, who feel marginalised, are turning to what Roy calls a Neo-fundamentalism - a closed, scriptural, conservative form of Islam based on *sharia* (Islamic law) - in an effort to reconnect with 'self' in an alien environment.<sup>49</sup> Neo-fundamentalism is just one reaction by Muslim youth as they attempt to redefine their identity in a western environment that often marginalises them because they 'look different'.

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<sup>43</sup> Christopher Lasch, *The Minimal Self: Psychic Survival in Troubled Times* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company), 34, 38.

<sup>44</sup> Zygmunt Bauman, *Identity: conversations with Beneditto Vecchi* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004), 13.

<sup>45</sup> Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1997), 65.

<sup>46</sup> Bo Strath, "A European Identity: To the Historical Limits of a Concept," *European Journal of Social Theory* 5, no.4 (2002): 399.

<sup>47</sup> Bassam Tibi, *Islam and the Cultural Accommodation of Social Change* (Oxford: Westview Press, 1990), 189

<sup>48</sup> Bassam Tibi, *Islam: Between Culture and Politics* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd., 2005), 189

<sup>49</sup> Olivier Roy, *Globalised Islam: The Search For a New Ummah* (London: Hurst & Company, 2004), 1

Thus, for Muslims adjusting to life in Europe the question of their visibility remains central to the perception/identity debate. Olivier Roy notes that because the West often “defines the space of the debate” any dialogue concerning Islam becomes a discourse on the meaning of the West.<sup>50</sup> Throughout the EU, disputes concerning the *hijab* and *burqa* have been about the opposition to western identity rather than about understanding Muslim culture. In France, for example, instead of the headscarf being a debate about Muslim identity, it focused on the “redefinition of *laïcité*” becoming a polemical exercise about French identity.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, in Denmark the cartoon controversy became a disagreement about the freedom of the western press rather than a debate about the religious rights of Muslims. The focus of these debates, reinforce the rejection of Muslim identifications. Thus, Thomas Meyer posits that the reasons behind some young Muslims assuming a fundamentalist identity lie “in the failed attempt to evolve a secure identity not against mainstream society but within it”.<sup>52</sup> The inability for Muslims to establish a European identity due to discrimination and exclusion only serves to encourage the formation of a radicalised identity. The radicalised identity becomes more real than any other social /familial tie. Likewise, in relation to perceived injustice, perception becomes more important than reality.

A global fear of Islamic terrorism and a clash of civilisations, endorsed by Samuel Huntington and compounded by increasing attacks in Europe in recent years, also contributes to the marginalisation of Europe’s Muslims.<sup>53</sup> However, Roy notes that, apart from the Madrid attack in 2004, terrorist action in Europe is rarely linked to global jihads.<sup>54</sup> Radicals tend to be ethnically diverse, western educated converts who do not represent the Islamic traditions of their parents. This is supported by a study conducted by the Bielefeld Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence, which revealed that 35.7% of third-generation Turkish youth in Germany felt “inclined towards religious fundamentalism of a violent nature” because of their perceived marginalisation by western society.<sup>55</sup> Though world leaders dispel the

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<sup>50</sup> Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 336.

<sup>51</sup> Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 337.

<sup>52</sup> Meyer, *Identity Mania*, 50.

<sup>53</sup> See Huntington’s *Clash of Civilizations*.

<sup>54</sup> Olivier Roy, “Islamic Terrorist Radicalisation in Europe” in *European Islam: Challenges for Society and Public Policy*, eds. Samir Amghar et al, (Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies, 2007), 54.

<sup>55</sup> W. Muller Heitmeyer, and J. Schroeder, “Verlockender Fundamentalismus, Türkische Jugendliche” in *Deutschland*. Frankfurt/M. 1997 cited in Meyer, *Identity Mania*, 47-49.

notion of a clash between civilisations, these youths make fertile ground for radical causes, because, as Benazir Bhutto wrote, the ‘clash’ is occurring within Islam in the form of a “critical battle for the hearts and souls of...Muslims around the world.”<sup>56</sup> Gilles Kepel concurs, arguing that this important “battle” will be fought in “European cities, where Islam is already a growing part of the West”.<sup>57</sup>

Academics like Roy, argue that it is imperative for the West to recognise Islam as a ‘mere’ religion, on par with other religions in order to avert the politicalisation of Islam. This would help to isolate extremists and prevent them from “building a political constituency”.<sup>58</sup> Tibi concurs, arguing that due to deterritorialisation and globalisation, Islam has become politicized making it difficult for Muslims to accommodate the ‘societal change’ involved with living in the West. If reformed, he argues, Islam can “be incorporated into a religious and cultural pluralism in western societies” because Islam is not only a religion but also a system of cultural symbols through which Muslims see the world.<sup>59</sup>

Jytte Klausen, who writes of a new wind blowing across Western Europe heralding a European Islam, “based on a new epistemology of faith and a new hermeneutics of textual interpretation”, endorses Roy’s argument.<sup>60</sup> In her interviews with Muslim elites in the EU, Klausen discovered embryonic ‘national faith-based umbrella groups’ who support integration and are focussing on political participation at a national level.<sup>61</sup> Kepel agrees that the time is ripe for the “hybridization of two distinct cultures” and that it is possible “that a new generation of Muslim thinkers will emerge...[who] will present a new face of Islam – reconciled with modernity – to the larger world.”<sup>62</sup> Alongside other reformists, Bhutto reminds Muslims of the need to return to *ijtihad*, which means ‘reason’ to reinterpret their faith according to their situation. Klausen supports this theory, commenting that *Ijtihad*,...has become the

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<sup>56</sup> Benazir Bhutto, *Reconciliation: Islam, Democracy and the West* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2008), 272.

<sup>57</sup> Kepel, 8.

<sup>58</sup> Roy, *European Islam*, 60.

<sup>59</sup> Tibi, *Between Culture*, 188.

<sup>60</sup> Klausen, 205.

<sup>61</sup> Klausen, 28.

<sup>62</sup> Kepel, 294-295.

rallying cry for self-styled moderate progressive Muslims” who are embracing western democracy while remaining faithful to Islam.<sup>63</sup>

Therefore, as Muslims seek to rediscover their identities for themselves, the response of political leadership in the EU will be vital to the continuing security of Europe. Samir Amghar et al, argue that political leaders tend to limit political solutions to a national and local level rather than to adopt a pan-European approach.<sup>64</sup> Amghar et al, argue that European Islam is already a reality and therefore Europe’s Muslims should be given a chance to develop a European identity and to feel that they belong to Europe. Given the opportunity, it may be possible for Europe’s new generation of Muslims...[to] become a valuable resource in the Union’s foreign policy endeavours to come to terms with the challenge of globalised Islam”.<sup>65</sup> Opportunity begins with acceptance. Acceptance begins with recognition, which is premised on being heard. As Khatami writes, dialogue “entails both speaking and listening...Listening is not a passive activity. It is an active engagement where the listener is exposed to the world created, discovered, or experienced by the speaker”.<sup>66</sup> Intercultural dialogue, thus, relies on listening and the ability to hear the voice of the ‘other’.

This thesis attempts to chart the current discourse between Islam and contemporary Europe by examining the theories relating to a budding European identity and an embryonic Euro-Muslim identity through the paradigm for peace - intercultural dialogue

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<sup>63</sup> Klausen, 9.

<sup>64</sup> Amghar, et al, *European Islam*, 4.

<sup>65</sup> Amghar, et al, *European Islam*, 6.

<sup>66</sup> Mohammad Khatami, *Dialogue Among Civilizations: A Paradigm for Peace*, eds. Theo Bekker and Joellen Pretorius (Pretoria: Unit for Policy Studies, University of Pretoria, 2001), 2-3.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE.**

“If I could start all over again, I would start with culture”.  
Jean Monnet.<sup>67</sup>

#### *Introduction - Dealing with Difference.*

The importance of culture to the 21<sup>st</sup> century cannot be underestimated. The impact of globalisation on cultures – shrinking borders, huge trans-global flows, fragmented societies – means that many people in Europe today interact with different cultures on a daily basis.<sup>68</sup> This intercultural interaction still generates the same tensions that have plagued Europe for centuries. Traditionally, people viewed the ‘other’ with suspicion, inevitably resulting in conflict as Europe’s violent history testifies. Ethnic tensions and cultural clashes, fanned by political or religious ambitions, resulted in internecine wars that decimated one part or another of the landscape for hundreds of years. Remarkably, Monnet’s vision brought unparalleled peace to an area previously crippled by conflict resulting in relative prosperity for nearly 500 million people. However, despite the fact that economic and political agreements united and transformed previously adversarial nations, the lingering shadows of ethnic tensions and cultural divisions continue to threaten the Monnet dream. Age-old xenophobic tendencies evidenced by discrimination and racism against minorities and immigrants, often reinforced by disparate social policies, threaten the integration story.

This chapter looks at some of these institutionalised inequalities and at the necessity for a ‘dialogue’ that will honestly address these discriminatory practices. The lack of harmonisation of social policies between member states disadvantages immigrants in various ways. The legal prohibition on the collection of personal data in some member states prevents the accurate recording of discriminatory practices, both direct

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<sup>67</sup> Brian Nelson, David Roberts & Walter Weit, eds. *Transnational Identity* (New York: Berg, 1992), 68.

<sup>68</sup> A 2007 Eurobarometer survey reported that 65% of EU residents interact with someone of a “different religion, ethnic background or nationality” on a weekly basis. *Intercultural Dialogue in Europe – Summary*, Flash Eurobarometer 217. The Gallop Organisation, December 2007.

and indirect.<sup>69</sup> Policies arising from the implementation of the Single European Act (SEA), the adoption of EU Citizenship at Maastricht, and the recalcitrance of some member states to efficiently implement Directives, all impact on Europe's immigrants, thus contributing to a form of legalised discrimination. The EU also struggles to coordinate policies regarding the prevention of racism and the protection of human rights. By declaring 2008 as the Year of Intercultural Dialogue, the EU institutions demonstrated their continued commitment to the development of intercultural competences and the promotion of intercultural dialogue involving not only public authorities but also civic society as well. The multitude of activities planned throughout the member states, during the year, provided the general populace with an opportunity to be exposed to, and interact with, a diversity of cultures, religions and ethnicities. It also presented an occasion for political leaders and policy makers to take ownership of the main issues involving minorities in Europe.

Future chapters of the European chronicle are reliant not only on the preservation of majority cultures present within the member states but also on Europe's ability to allow minority narratives to be interwoven into the larger European meta-narrative. The ancient Greek philosopher Thrasymachus coined the term 'might is right' to describe his belief that justice always protects the interests of the stronger party. It seems this philosophical bias permeated Western European polities, which have historically favoured majority rule at the expense of their minorities.<sup>70</sup> Since Westphalia, and the creation of the nation-state, successive governments have sought to protect a majority homogenous polity by alienating, marginalising, expelling, cleansing or coercively assimilating their minority populations. The concern being that today, "ethnocultural conflicts have become the most common source of political violence in the world and they show no signs of abating".<sup>71</sup> Europe's future could thus, depend on its capability to recognise, accept and preserve the individual cultures of its minorities as much as on economic progress. In fact, with Europe's ageing population and slowing birth rates, minorities in the form of immigrants will probably

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<sup>69</sup> T. Choudhury, "Muslims and Discrimination" in *European Islam: Challenges for Society and Public Policy* (Brussels, Centre for European Policy Studies, 2007), 78.

<sup>70</sup> For an in-depth discussion on liberalism and minority rights see Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).

<sup>71</sup> Will Kymlicka, ed. *The Rights of Minority Cultures*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995), 1.

be the workforce that drives continuing economic growth. The reality being that Europe's future relies heavily on immigration.

Europe's largest religious minority group is its Muslim population, and any vision for unity is limited by Europe's capability to embrace the diversity of its Muslim people.<sup>72</sup> Precisely because of their 'difference' studies show that Muslims are often subject to "discrimination and marginalisation in employment, education and housing, and are also victims of negative stereotyping and prejudicial attitudes".<sup>73</sup> While discrimination and Islamophobia has been aggravated in recent years by terrorism, and by the resulting 'war on terror', the lack of political harmonisation of social practices has also reinforced the ongoing rejection and marginalisation of Europe's Muslims. Although the Maastricht Treaty provided a legal base for cultural policy (Art. 151 EC), thus providing a basis for supporting member states' actions in an effort to safeguard Europe's cultural heritage, "[A]ny act of harmonisation of Member States' legal and regulatory provisions is excluded from the scope of Article 151" meaning that Council decisions remain constrained by unanimity.<sup>74</sup> This ongoing tussle between intergovernmentalism and supranationalism impacts more on those already marginalised because they are different. In order to safeguard 'Europe's cultural heritage', all ethnic strands need to be equally valued, including the threads of Islam already interwoven into Europe's cultural heritage. The question being, can Islam be considered a legitimate part of European history and thus a part of Europe's future, or will prejudice allow the ancient shadows of Christian/Islamic conflicts in the fifteenth century to continue to haunt this relationship?<sup>75</sup>

Increasingly, during the past two decades the rising visibility of Muslims as the 'other', have presented a challenge not only to the disparate immigration policies of member states, but also to the multicultural paradigm. Ethnically, culturally, and religiously different, Muslims expose Europe's longstanding inability to accept minority groups.

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<sup>72</sup> Cesari, 9.

<sup>73</sup> EUMC, *Muslims in the European Union – Discrimination and Islamophobia*, 2006, 108.

<sup>74</sup> European Parliament Fact Sheets 4.16.4. Cultural Policy,  
[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/facts/4\\_16\\_4\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/facts/4_16_4_en.htm)

<sup>75</sup> Barrie Wharton, "The Integration of Islam in the European Union, Prospects and Challenges", 4.  
[www.eliamep.gr/eliamep/files/op0402](http://www.eliamep.gr/eliamep/files/op0402)

### Why dialogue?

Enlargement of the EU coupled with rising transnational flows of people has led to increased contact between different cultures, religions, ethnic groups and diverse languages. In an effort to facilitate a mutual understanding and a deeper tolerance, the EU is committed to the development of intercultural competences and the promotion of intercultural dialogue, involving not only public authorities but also civil society. To realise this objective the European Parliament and Council established EYID 2008 by Decision No. 1983/2006/EC, and subsequently launched the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue at Ljubljana in Slovenia on January 8. Intercultural dialogue has no legal mandate and is not specifically regulated by international, European or national law. However, several international and European conventions as well as EU directives and national legal frameworks do guarantee the prerequisite:

safety and dignity, equality of opportunity and participation, where different views can be voice openly without fear, where there are shared spaces for exchanges between different cultures to take place.<sup>76</sup>

These shared spaces are vital to the process of intercultural dialogue. At the opening ceremony in Slovenia, Ján Figel', the European Commissioner for Education and Culture said the aim of EYID was to:

Move beyond tolerance...towards a genuine intercultural Europe...[by encouraging] respectful exchanges between groups of different cultural backgrounds on an equal basis.<sup>77</sup>

Beneath the carapace of the European Agenda for Culture (2007), the aim of EYID is to promote a better understanding of Europe's complex cultural environment.<sup>78</sup> With a budget of Euro 10 million and an event calendar involving every member state its aim was to make a real difference not only at the political level but also at the grassroots community level throughout the EU. Through a series of events at the EU, national, and municipal levels, involving art, debates,

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<sup>76</sup> ERICarts, Sharing Diversity: National Approaches to Intercultural Dialogue in Europe. Executive Summary, March 2008, 2. <http://www.ericarts.org>

<sup>77</sup> Opening Ceremony, [www.euractiv.com/en/culture/dialogue/article-169403](http://www.euractiv.com/en/culture/dialogue/article-169403)

<sup>78</sup> With a budget of EUR 215 million for the 2007-2013 period, the "Europe for Citizens" programme is committed to promoting active European citizenship in the continuing construction of Europe by improving the mutual knowledge of culture and common heritage of Europe's peoples through a series of activities. Accessible via [http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/index_en.html)



theatre, exhibitions and inter-religious dialogue, the EU institutions hoped to forge closer links between all European peoples and their respective cultures. The importance of cross-cultural discourse, appreciating and accommodating diverse cultures, is, of course, not new to Europe. The history of a Europe (pre-EU) stretching from Russia to the Mediterranean, from Britain to the Balkans, encompassing many different ethnic and religious groups has all too often experienced ethnic cleansings, religious wars, pogroms and fear of the 'other'. As recently as the 1920s, the end of a century-long war for Greek liberation from Turkey resulted in a Greek-Muslim exchange of population involving 1 million Greeks and hundreds of thousands of Turks, Pomaks and Muslims.<sup>79</sup> Since then "millions of Europeans, whose only fault was residence on the wrong side of an artificially created political border, lost the right to continue to live in the land of their ancestors".<sup>80</sup> Intercultural conflict is therefore, not foreign to Europe and while the EU has successfully stabilized its 'political borders', minorities in many states still face discrimination and rejection, as do immigrants, the largest group of which, at an estimated 15 million, is Muslim.<sup>81</sup>

In light of increasing tensions throughout Europe involving its Muslim population, dialogue between Islam and Christianity was a key part of EYID in addressing growing concerns. Academic literature suggests that it is the marginalisation and exclusion of Europe's Muslims that leads to conflict rather than inherent cultural differences.<sup>82</sup> Inter-religious and intercultural discourse is vital, therefore, to a better understanding of the Euro/Islam debate and to determining a socio-cultural vision for Europe's future. Leading European experts are concerned over the lack of leadership by EU institutions and policy makers, in taking ownership of the main issues relating to the presence of Islam in Europe.<sup>83</sup> A 2006 report by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) on 'Islamophobia in the EU', states:

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<sup>79</sup> Terry G. Jordan, *The European Culture Area* (New York: Harper Collin, 1996), 171.

<sup>80</sup> Jordan, 171.

<sup>81</sup> Due to the lack of official statistics, estimates vary greatly. See Nezar AlSayyad, & Manuel Castells, eds. *Muslim Europe or Euro-Islam: Politics, Culture, and Citizenship In The Age of Globalisation*, (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2002), 83-84.

<sup>82</sup> Meyer, *Identity Mania*, 50.

<sup>83</sup> See Samir Amghar, Amel Boubekeur, and Michael Emerson, eds. *European Islam: Challenges for Society and Public Policy*, (Brussels: CEPS, 2007).

Policy responses need to acknowledge that Muslim communities in general have experienced long-standing discrimination, whether direct or indirect, which has impacted on employment opportunities, education standards and social marginalisation.<sup>84</sup>

High profile conflicts in the previous three decades have led to the perception of an ‘Islam in crisis’, despite the fact that the vast majority of the EU’s 15 million Muslims are peaceful law abiding residents. Political responses to this ‘crisis’ fall into two approaches. One, an essentialist and culturalist view, which situates the ‘crisis’ firmly within Islam, thereby insinuating that Islam itself is to blame and the solution must come from within Islam, meaning that Islam must be Europeanised in order to fit the Western democratic mould.<sup>85</sup> The other approach is to limit political solutions to a national and local level rather than to adopt a pan-European approach.<sup>86</sup> However, these approaches negate the legitimate political and social reasons behind the unrest and fail to develop policies at an EU level. Today European Islam exists as a powerful transnational phenomenon and academics argue that European policy must keep pace with this reality. Thus, an improvement in mutual understanding through intercultural dialogue and inter-religious dialogue, coupled with the implementation of inclusionary practices is crucial to Europe’s future. For any ‘crisis’ in Islam in Europe is, in fact, a ‘European crisis’.

### Global Dialogue.

The concept of intercultural dialogue has become increasingly important in recent years with the growing interaction of diverse cultures resulting from the unparalleled cross-global movement of people. This trans-global flow has brought new challenges. Though globalisation opened borders, standardized socio-economic and political structures, it has not created a unity of outlook.<sup>87</sup> In his article in 1993, Samuel P. Huntington theorized that this diversity of outlook would eventually lead to a ‘Clash of Civilizations’. His book (1996), warned of civilizational fault lines demarcated by inherent cultural differences that would replace the ideological clash previously

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<sup>84</sup> EUMC, *Muslims in the European Union: Discrimination and Islamophobia* (Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2006).

<sup>85</sup> Amghar and others, 4.

<sup>86</sup> Amghar and others, 4.

<sup>87</sup> Tibi, *Between Culture and Politics*, 189.

created by the Cold War.<sup>88</sup> In 1999, in response to Huntington's book *Mohammed Khatami*, the former President of Iran, introduced the idea of a 'Dialogue Among Civilizations', reminding world leaders of the pre-eminence of dialogue as a means to prevent 'clashes'. The United Nations (UN) embraced the idiom, adopting resolution A/56/5 and named 2001 the "Year of Dialogue Among Civilizations".<sup>89</sup> On its official website Kofi Annan says:

I see...dialogue as a chance for people of different cultures and traditions to get to know each other better, whether they live on opposite sides of the world or on the same street.<sup>90</sup>

The propitious start to the new millennium hoped for by the UN was, literally blown apart by the attack on New York's twin towers. The tragedy of 9/11, in 2001, not only seemed to reinforce Huntington's prediction at a political level resulting in the subsequent 'war on terror' but also generated a deep fear and suspicion of Muslims worldwide. In an opinion poll conducted in the United Kingdom (UK) after the London bomb attack in July 2005, the poll found that 32% of Muslims "felt they had been the object of hostility: and 42% felt they had been the object of suspicion".<sup>91</sup> Whilst understanding the fear and anger generated by this act of terrorism, this suspicion can result in policies that adversely impact upon all of Europe's Muslims, not just a few extremists. The EUMC are concerned that:

Policy responses for community cohesion and integration risk being based not on the promotion of equality and fundamental rights, but on the prevention of terrorism.<sup>92</sup>

Meaningful dialogue is imperative, therefore, in Europe, in order to prevent Muslim communities from being subject not only to terrorist attacks themselves, but also to the policies invoked in response to such attacks. In September 2006, on the

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<sup>88</sup> See Samuel P. Huntington, *The clash of civilizations and the remaking of the world order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996). Huntington proposes that the next major conflict will be based on cultural and religious divisions running along seven major fault lines between the world's major civilizations – Western, Orthodox, Islam, Hindu, Buddhist, Sinic and Latin American.

<sup>89</sup> Resolution accessible via <http://www.un.org/documents/ares/566e.pdf>

<sup>90</sup> Accessible via <http://www.un.org/Dialogue/>

<sup>91</sup> A. Blick, T. Choudhury and S. Weir, *The Rules of the Game: Terrorism, Community and Human Rights*, (Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust: York, 2006), 19, cited in Tufyal Choudhury "Muslims and Discrimination" in Amghar et al, eds. *European Islam: Challenges for Society and Public Policy* (Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies, 2007), 92.

<sup>92</sup> EUMC, *Islamophobia*, 3-4.

anniversary of 9/11, Kaveh L. Afrasibi, the founder and director of Global Interfaith Peace, interviewed Mohammed Khatami. When asked to evaluate the progress of dialogue, he replied:

Dialogue Among Civilizations was not conceived as a political project seeking immediate results. Rather, the purpose behind it has been to cause a paradigm shift away from violence, conflict, intolerance and cross-cultural misunderstandings.<sup>93</sup>

While the tragedy of 9/11 and the ensuing ‘war on terror’ was dramatically opposed to a ‘Dialogue Among Civilizations’, Khatami believed “those events at the same time reinforced the need and importance of dialogue...as an antidote”.<sup>94</sup> Terrorism, however, severely tests the therapeutic qualities of the dialogic process as it inflames the age-old divisions that have dogged the European journey.

### European Dialogue.

In recent years, Europe has suffered its share of violence and ‘cross-cultural misunderstandings’. Cultural divisions evidenced by discrimination, racism and xenophobic tendencies threaten to undermine that ‘limited but decisive step’ set in motion by Jean Monnet fifty-one years ago. A ‘step’ that saw an increasingly integrated Europe rise, as a Phoenix, from the ashes of two cataclysmic World Wars. Transforming an embryonic Coal and Steel Community of six nations into a geopolitical Union of twenty-seven, which today provides peace and relative prosperity for almost 500 million people is truly a unique achievement. The EU’s economic and political journey benefited from a strong vision, and today the EU is undoubtedly a world player in both senses. Gone is the “expectations-capability gap” of the 1980s in terms of the EU’s ability to perform on the world stage.<sup>95</sup> It has consistently and successfully, performed, especially in the new millennium, as a humanitarian, civilian and military actor. Furthermore, policies such as those covering the EU Space Policy, EU Central Asia policy, Kosovo, the development of EPAs, climate change and security, Iran’s nuclear policy and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), all testify to the EU’s wide ranging involvement as an international

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<sup>93</sup> Khatami, [http://www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/2006/webArticles/102006\\_Khatami.htm](http://www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/2006/webArticles/102006_Khatami.htm)

<sup>94</sup> Khatami

<sup>95</sup> See Christopher Hill, “The Capability-Expectations Gap, or Conceptualizing Europe’s International Role”, *Journal of Common Market Studies* 31, no.3 (1993).

actor.<sup>96</sup> The 'gap' continues, however, no longer in external policy, but in respect to internal social cohesion.

Increasing conflicts involving minority groups and more especially the EU's Muslim population have exposed a social malaise deep beneath the fabric of European society. The Rushdie affair in Britain (1989), the headscarf affair in France (1989) and the Danish cartoon affair (2005) are all symptomatic of the complexity of cultural differences. Coupled with the riots in Bradford, England (2001), and Paris (2005 and 2007), these 'clashes' highlight not only a difference in ideology, but also a rejection of the 'public space' allocated to Muslims in Europe. Pre 1970s, Muslims throughout Europe were 'invisible' in that they kept to themselves and did not make too many demands on the societies in which they lived, but these incidences catapulted them onto centre stage. While immigrants accepted the status quo they could be ignored, but from the late 1970s, an Islamic identity began to assert itself. In France, for example, Muslims suddenly became highly visible in 1989 with the headscarf affair:

Islam has been the second religion of France for more than a century, but France only discovered it then. Yazid Sabeg.<sup>97</sup>

Symptomatic of social discontent, the conflicts above demonstrated a serious need for better communication, in order to understand what the issues are, so that both sides could then work together to find mutually satisfactory solutions. Unfortunately, these protests were overshadowed by actions of an increasingly sinister nature. The bomb attacks in Paris (1995), Madrid (2004), London (2005), and the murders of Pim Fortuyn (2002), and Theo Van Gogh (2004), in the Netherlands, and Anna Lindt in Sweden (2003), as well as the tragedy of 9/11, demonstrated the dark side of extremism. These actions also threw suspicion upon 15 million legal Muslim residents in the EU, who are equally vulnerable to these extremist attacks. An official report issued after the London bomb attacks stated, "The victims of the London bombings were people of many nationalities, British and non-British, whites and non-whites, Muslims and non-Muslims".<sup>98</sup> Nearly half of the 52 people killed in the attack were

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<sup>96</sup> Accessible via [http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/cfsp/intro/index.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/cfsp/intro/index.htm)

<sup>97</sup> Stephanie Giry. "France and its Muslims," *Foreign Affairs* 85, no.5 (2006): 93.

<sup>98</sup> EUMC, *The Impact of 7 July 2005 London Bomb Attacks on Muslim Communities in the EU*, (Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2005), 5

foreigners and five of them were Muslims, showing that terrorism is no respecter of persons or culture.<sup>99</sup> Thomas Meyer argues that it is not cultural differences *per se* but rather the politicalisation of cultural difference that leads to fundamentalism and acts of terror.<sup>100</sup> The opportunity for politicalisation arises through marginalisation. A study conducted in Germany in 1999, found that one third, of third-generation Turkish youth, felt inclined towards “religious fundamentalism of a violent nature” because of a “lack of orientation and recognition denied by mainstream society”.<sup>101</sup> This sense of marginalisation by these third-generation Turkish-Germans, reflects the failure of integration policies. Considering that they were born on German soil as were their parents and their grandparents, it begs the question, how many generations will it take before ‘immigrants’ can claim the same birth-right as mainstream society? How many generations before they can feel a sense of belonging to the land of their birth? Intercultural dialogue is vital to understanding the ‘others’ experience in order to build a relationship between cultures resulting in the elimination of marginalisation and the politicalisation of cultural differences.

In the lead up to EYID, Ján Figel’ remarked that while integration had to start with “simple materials and realities: coal and steel” today “business is not enough to keep people together”.<sup>102</sup> Since the mid 1960s, the theory of intergovernmentalism had been dominant in European integration. Intergovernmentalism, which privileges the role of nation-states within the integration process, is a useful theoretical concept with which to explore the tension between the EU institutions. This state-centrist approach is particularly visible when policy areas encroach on fundamental issues of national sovereignty. While the Treaties provide the basis for EU law and give the European Commission the right to put forward proposals, it is the European Council, after consultation with the European Parliament that votes on the legislation. It is this secondary legislation passed by the Council, in the form of Regulations, Directives and Decisions, which forms the body of Community law. The need for consensus among the Councils’ member state representatives, who remain fiercely protective of their sovereignty in politically sensitive areas, like immigration, means that progress is often conditional. Intergovernmentalism is further supported by the principle of

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<sup>99</sup> Philippe Le Grain, *Immigrants: Your Country Needs Them* (London: Little, Brown, 2007), 4

<sup>100</sup> Meyer, *Identity Mania*, 8.

<sup>101</sup> Meyer, *Identity Mania*, 47.

<sup>102</sup> Teresa Kuchler, *euobserver.com*, Accessible via <http://euobserver.com/879/25262/>

subsidiarity, which was established as a general rule in the Preamble to the Maastricht Treaty (now Article 5 of EC). It means that in all areas of non-exclusive competence, the Community may only “take action where objectives can best be attained by action at Community rather than at national level”.<sup>103</sup> Although the Commission had the opportunity to expand the EU’s competence over the rights of immigrants at Maastricht, the crossing of external borders, immigration policy and third-country nationals, specifically ‘conditions of entry and movement’, ‘conditions of residence...including family reunion and access to employment’ were all kept firmly under intergovernmental control under the third pillar, (Article K.1 EC).<sup>104</sup> Thus, legislation concerning immigrants remains hindered by the power struggle between the Commission who sees its role as one of promoting European integration, and the member states, which want to retain sovereignty in this area. This resulted in confusing variances in policy between the member states. So much so that even the European Parliament criticized continuing inconsistencies in its 1992, Van Outrive report:

For the moment, the Member States are in the ascendant in their long-standing rivalry with the Commission. The introduction of the third pillar is evidence of this. It ought to be realized that much power is being transferred to national officials. This is a threat to a democratic Europe; it definitely represents a step backwards and cannot be accepted without protest.<sup>105</sup>

While the Commission touts itself as the ‘driving force behind European integration’ ((2000) COM 34) and the Community is the watchdog ‘to ensure fulfillment of the obligations arising out of this Treaty’ (Article 10 (ex 5) EC), as mentioned, Community law is passed by qualified majority vote or unanimity of the member state representatives in the Council. Hence, the accusation of law according to the lowest common denominator, for, consensus on politically sensitive issues like immigration is often difficult to achieve. Placing immigration and third country nationals under the third pillar was a reaction to the impending loss of control over borders necessitated by the four freedoms resulting from the SEA. European integration, especially in

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<sup>103</sup> Official Journal, OJC 191 of 29.7.1992. [http://europa.eu/scadplus/treaties/Maastricht\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/scadplus/treaties/Maastricht_en.htm)

<sup>104</sup> Article K. 1 (3), EC Agreement on Social Policy, Art. 2 (3) placed working conditions of third country nationals within EU (less UK) competence.

<sup>105</sup> Van Outrive, L. (1992) Second Report on the entry into force of the Schengen Agreements, A3-0336/92 (European Parliament) cited in Ian Ward, , “Law and Other Europeans,” *Journal of Common Market Studies* 35, no.1 (1997): 86.

relation to the harmonization of social policies suffers from this protection of national interests meaning, “Co-operation within the EU...is essentially conservative and pragmatic”.<sup>106</sup> Whilst member states concede the necessity of pooling sovereignty to further economic integration (low politics), integration in areas of high politics such as national sovereignty and national identity, remain ‘impermeable’.<sup>107</sup>

### Dialogue, Economics and Politics.

Following on from the UN year of “Dialogue Among Civilizations” and after 9/11, Romano Prodi, the then President of the European Commission, instigated a conference on Intercultural Dialogue in Brussels on 20-21 March 2002. Its aim was to encourage mutual tolerance, knowledge and understanding not only within the EU but also with its neighbours in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Run under the auspices of the European Commission’s “Jean Monnet Action” the conference focussed on much more than ‘Inter-religious Dialogue’.<sup>108</sup> Continuing in this vein, in 2004, Ján Figel’, the EU Commissioner for Education and Culture proposed the Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008. Equally concerned with promoting an understanding between Europe’s multi-ethnic communities, Ján Figel’ remarked, that in recent years:

Europe has seen major changes resulting from successive enlargements of the Union, greater mobility in the Single Market, and increased travel...[resulting] ...in interaction between Europeans and the different cultures, languages, ethnic groups and religions...Dialogue between cultures would therefore appear to be an essential tool in forging closer links...<sup>109</sup>

The mention of the Single Market highlights an area of legalised discrimination, which still has not been resolved 20 years later. Within Europe today there is an estimated 17 million third country nationals.<sup>110</sup> These are immigrants, who have legal residence but not nationality status, and a large proportion of these people are Muslims. Whilst the adoption of the SEA in 1986 along with the four freedoms necessary for the creation of an internal market, gave a welcome boost to economic

<sup>106</sup> Michelle Cini, *European Union Politics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 102

<sup>107</sup> Cini, 104

<sup>108</sup> Other subjects included – Images of Europe in the World, Democracy and Human Rights, Globalisation and Solidarity, and the Role of the European Union. Accessible via [www.ecsanet.org/dialogue/contributions.htm](http://www.ecsanet.org/dialogue/contributions.htm)

<sup>109</sup> Accessible via [www.europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/1226](http://www.europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/1226)

<sup>110</sup> Eurostat estimates cited in Europa Press Release accessible via <http://europa.eu.rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/05/290&format=H>



integration between the member states, it disadvantaged third country nationals.

Article 14 (ex 7a) EC created a single internal market:

an area without internal frontiers in which the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital is ensured in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty.

Although three of the four freedoms in the SEA were welcomed as a means of promoting economic growth across Europe, the fourth (persons) was problematical for member states. Understandably, member states are reluctant to give up sovereignty concerning their borders fearing an increase in illegal immigrants, drug trafficking and increased social welfare burdens. Immigrants in the form of third country nationals, found themselves caught in the middle of the struggle to remove barriers to integration on one hand, and the protection of state sovereignty on the other. While member states “agreed that the controls on all goods, services and capital had to go by the end of 1992” some argued that only EC nationals enjoyed the right of free movement of persons.<sup>111</sup> This dispute over the free movement of persons across internal borders resulted in the *General Declaration on Articles 13 to 19 of the Single European Act* and the *Political Declaration* being annexed to the SEA:

According to the General Declaration ‘[n]othing in these provisions shall affect the right of Member States to take such measures as they consider necessary for the purpose of controlling immigration from third countries, and to combat terrorism, crime, the traffic in drugs and illicit trading in works of art and antiques’. In this declaration the Member States explicitly state that Article 14 (ex Article 7A) EC Treaty does not affect their powers to adopt measures which they consider necessary to control...the crossing of internal borders by third country nationals legally resident in one of the Member States.<sup>112</sup>

Including immigration from third countries in the same sentence as terrorism, crime, and drug trafficking, cast dispersions on all third country nationals and set the tone for future debates on immigration policies. This ‘legalized’ form of discrimination insinuated that immigrants were synonymous with crime and therefore exacerbated racism and xenophobic tendencies. This was further exacerbated by the concept of EU Citizenship, an idea intended to promote loyalty to a European identity. While not

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<sup>111</sup> Steve Peer, *EU Justice and Home Affairs Law* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2000), 64.

<sup>112</sup> Helen Staples, *The Legal Status of Third Country Nationals Resident in the European Union* (London: Kluwer International Law, 1999), 31.

actually conferring any new significant rights on EU nationals, this legislation only reinforced the exclusion of third country nationals.

Citizenship of the European Union was established by the addition of a new Part Two to the Treaty of Maastricht (Articles 8-8e EC, renumbered in the ToA to Articles 17-21 EC). What did citizenship mean? Was it just another way of reinforcing the rights of economic actors in the EU or would it further the political and social rights of all ‘Europeans’? Most importantly, who could become ‘EU Citizens’ and who was excluded? Articles 18-21 EC proclaimed:

- the right to move and reside freely within any Member State, subject to the limitations and conditions laid down by the Treaty and by the measures adopted to give it effect, Article 18 (ex Article 8a) EC.
- the right to vote and to be elected in municipal elections held in any Member State by Member State nationals resident in that Member State and the right to vote and stand in elections for the European Parliament, irrespective of the Member State of residence, Article 19 (ex Article 8b) EC.
- the right to diplomatic and consular protection from the authorities of any Member State in third countries, Article 20 (ex Article 8c) EC.
- the right to petition the European Parliament and the right to apply to the European Ombudsman, Article 21 (ex Article 8d) EC.

These rights, which do not replace any other rights already conferred by the Treaty, do not add anything substantial. They largely reiterate those already present, “albeit scattered across primary and secondary sources”.<sup>113</sup> For the purposes of this paper, the most important Article is Article 17(1):

Citizenship of the Union is hereby established. Every person holding the nationality of a Member State shall be a citizen of the Union. Citizenship of the Union shall complement and not replace national citizenship.

For third country nationals, limiting the rights of Union citizenship exclusively to member state nationals simply reinforced their marginalisation. Maastricht citizenship intended to promote a sense of belonging to a more ‘social Europe’ only increased the

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<sup>113</sup> Catherine Barnard, *The Substantive Law of The EU: The Four Freedoms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 404.

marginalisation of 17 million legal residents, thereby reinforcing the status of third country nationals as second-class citizens. As J. J. H. Weiler commented in 1991:

It would be ironic that an ethos which rejected the nationalism of the Member States gave birth to a new European nation and European nationalism... We have made little progress if the Us becomes European (instead of German or French or British) and the Them becomes those... who do not enjoy the privileges of citizenship.<sup>114</sup>

Further differences arise in relation to family reunification laws, which differ from state to state. Germany confines these rights to the immediate nuclear family; Italy extends them also to cover dependent parents; Britain is trying to limit these rights to first-generation migrants only, and France toughened its laws in July 2006 insisting that the breadwinner must be able to prove financial support for the family, and the family must speak French and understand French values. Increasing restrictions like the new test for family reunification in the Netherlands further entrench discriminatory policies. As C. Joppé comments, “most of the family migrants targeted by Dutch policy are Muslims of Turkish or Moroccan origin” and “what began as an immigrant integration policy ... has turned into its opposite, a no-integration policy”.<sup>115</sup> Furthermore, member states differ widely in their determination of nationality – an example being the United Kingdom, which passed the British Nationality Act of 1981 redefining British citizenship.<sup>116</sup> In their struggle to accommodate the influx of immigrants since the 1970s, different member states have implemented separate immigration policies. Britain opted for a multiculturalism based on integration while France chose a model of assimilation. The Netherlands attempted to incorporate integration under its ‘pillarized’ system and still other member states opted for a combination of these models.<sup>117</sup> All of these systems were developed to deal with the ‘immigrant problem’ without consultation with immigrant communities and their failure can in part be attributed to a lack of intercultural

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<sup>114</sup> J.H.H Weiler, “The Transformation of Europe” (1991) 100 *Yale Law Journal* 2403, cited in Steiner, 321

<sup>115</sup> C Joppé, “Beyond national Models: Civic Integration Policies for Immigrants in Western Europe,” *Western European Politics* 30, no.11 (2007): 8, cited in Choudhury, *European Islam*, 86.

<sup>116</sup> See Randall Hansen, “From Subject to Citizens: Immigration and Nationality Law in the United Kingdom,” in Randall Hansen and Patrick Weil eds. *Towards A European Nationality: Citizenship, Immigration and Nationality Law in the EU* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 69-94.

<sup>117</sup> Parekh, *A New Politics of Identity*, 100.

dialogue, and concern for the rights of the very people these policies are charged with helping.

*Dialogue, Human Rights and Racism.*

The Post WW II creation of a European identity has always purported to be based on the respect of human rights. The preamble in the Treaty, which formed the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) does not directly mention the protection of human rights. Yet, the language is heavy with symbolism, justifying the need for not only an economic union but also the need to achieve ‘real solidarity’, the ‘merging of essential interests’, ‘community’ ‘destiny henceforth shared’ and ‘world peace’.<sup>118</sup> The formation of the (ECSC) professed the creation of a “community long divided by bloody conflict”.<sup>119</sup> Although in affect it was based on an economic merger, the underlying vision was for the creation of a community that could provide peace and protection for all. The reality, however, is that the founding Treaties omitted any specific references to human rights and rather than a cohesive approach, considerable differences have always existed within the various Member States.<sup>120</sup> Though enshrined in the European Charter for Fundamental Rights (ECHR), the protection of human rights in Treaties is a relatively, recent phenomena. Clauses appear in the 1991 Maastricht Treaty, Article 6(2), the 1997 Amsterdam Treaty, Article 6(2) and the 2000 Nice Treaty amending Article 7, which allow the EU to discipline any member state in breach of human rights issues. These recent provisions, though, have failed to equip the EU with the capacity or the resources to monitor human rights effectively”.<sup>121</sup> At the opening ceremony of EYID, Ján Figel’ said:

Creating good conditions for a genuine intercultural dialogue implies going beyond mere tolerance, overcoming the traditional logic of majority and minority.<sup>122</sup>

The legacy of ‘traditional logic’ means that today the EU still has no minority rights standard and no unified protection policy. In many areas, there is a vast gap in the

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<sup>118</sup> Preamble, ECSC Treaty.

<sup>119</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/publications/booklets/eu\\_documentation/04/txt03\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/publications/booklets/eu_documentation/04/txt03_en.htm)

<sup>120</sup> Preamble, ECSC Treaty.

<sup>121</sup> Andrew Williams, *EU Human Rights Policies: A Study in Iron* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 160.

<sup>122</sup> Williams, 195.

<sup>122</sup> Opening Ceremony, [www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu/457.0.html](http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu/457.0.html)

living standards and rights enjoyed by the majority and some minorities. While the focus on EYID is to raise awareness of the EU's multi-ethnic character in order to promote social cohesion the spin off must be also be a focus by policy makers on the harmonisation of standards between majority and minority. The EU is in need of a common framework of minority protection even though legalizing pan European minority rights would undoubtedly open a Pandora's box because social policy remains a "jealously guarded national domain" especially within the more powerful member states.<sup>123</sup> The failure of the EU to develop cohesive human rights policies not only disadvantages minorities within the EU but also tarnishes the EU image abroad. Andrew Williams points out that a resulting bifurcation "along an internal/external fault line" jeopardizes the search for a European identity.<sup>124</sup> While it is easy to lay the ground rules for countries wishing to join the EU,<sup>125</sup> it is not so easy to ascribe, monitor or enforce human rights within the member states themselves.<sup>126</sup>

The EU has long recognized that racism and xenophobic tendencies mar the socio-cultural integration of Europe, and consequently established the European Union's Monitoring Centre for Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), in 1996. In 1997, a Eurobarometer opinion poll on racism and xenophobia in Europe found that 33% of those interviewed described themselves as 'quite racist' or 'very racist' and this figure rose to 48% in France.<sup>127</sup> Respondents thought that European Institutions should be more active in combating racism.<sup>128</sup> The name changed in March 2007 to the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) but the mission statement remains the same – to be a "thinking, acting and challenging network organization, working in all sectors of society for equality and diversity, and against racism and xenophobia in the European Union."<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Honor Mahony, "Nine states call for revival of social Europe," *EU Observer/Brussels*, <http://euobserver.com/851/23505>

<sup>124</sup> Williams, 196.

<sup>125</sup> See the "Guidelines on the Recognition of New States," *British Yearbook of International Law* (1991), 560.

<sup>126</sup> Williams, 194-195.

<sup>127</sup> Eurobarometer 1997, No. 471 accessible via [www.eu.europa](http://www.eu.europa)

<sup>128</sup> Eurobarometer 1997.

<sup>129</sup> EUMC, *The Impact of 7 July 2005* (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2005), Mission Statement on back cover.

How does this work? After the July 7, 2005 London Bomb attacks the EUMC compiled a report to assess the extent of reprisals against the Muslim communities in the EU in the wake of this tragedy.<sup>130</sup> Its purpose was to analyse the initial increase in faith hate violence against Muslims within various member states, and the endeavours of the political community to lessen this backlash. The report found that in the short term there was little backlash against Muslim communities as a result of “the swift responses by governments, politicians and opinion leaders, who made serious efforts to distinguish clearly between these criminal acts and Islam”.<sup>131</sup> However, as expressed by some of the opposition parties, exclusionary politics are widespread. In the Czech Republic, the non-parliamentary National Party demanded the “expulsion of all Muslims and the closing of borders”.<sup>132</sup> In Sweden the largest opposition party, the Swedish Democrats, declared the terror attacks in London to be the result of a “mass immigration policy”.<sup>133</sup> In France, the government, the Press and the Council of the Muslim Faith (CFCM) all condemned the attacks while distinguishing between terrorism and the Muslim community as a whole, whereas the President of the Mouvement pour la France (MFP), Philippe de Villiers, denounced the “progressive Islamisation of French society”.<sup>134</sup> The EUMC report insists that with regard to integration of ethnic minorities, more especially the Muslim community, “positive change is possible provided that there is clear political leadership, support from the institutions and civil society, as well as sensitive reporting in the media”.<sup>135</sup> But is this just rhetoric?

As previously mentioned, the EU has purported to recognize the importance of human rights from its inception. Indeed, a legacy of the Council of Europe is the Council’s most famous document, the ECHR, established in 1949. All members of the EU must sign the ECHR but signing does not necessarily mean action. In France, for example, it took 24 years to ratify the convention (1974), and another seven years to accept the right of individual petition although all French courts now recognize the convention and, “ECHR rights and legal concepts, alien to the

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<sup>130</sup> See the report by the EUMC, *The Impact of 7 July 2005*.

<sup>131</sup> EUMC, 7 July, 39.

<sup>132</sup> EUMC, 7 July, 42.

<sup>133</sup> EUMC, 7 July, 42.

<sup>134</sup> EUMC, 7 July, 42-49.

<sup>135</sup> EUMC, 7 July, 3.

French legal tradition and culture, are now...well absorbed".<sup>136</sup> Though the EU is committed through the FRA to providing assistance and expertise to member states when implementing Community law, how effectively these well-absorbed 'legal concepts' are in bringing about real change in society throughout the member states remains to be seen. Media reports support the findings by the FRA that Muslims suffer physical attacks or racial discrimination in one or other of the member states on a regular basis.<sup>137</sup>

In 2007, the FRA published a report summarizing the development of racism and discrimination from 2000-2005 and describing the progress of EU and member state initiatives to combat these problems.<sup>138</sup> The report compares data from Eurobarometer polls in 2001 and 2003 on the subject of racism. One of the difficulties encountered is that of insufficient official data on ethnic and national origins, which, the report says, hinders the development of anti-discrimination policies.<sup>139</sup> Inconsistency of data makes it difficult to construct a pan-European picture of the affects of racism. In the UK 56,694 racist incidents were reported for the 2003-2004 period. This is believed to be a true indication of the level of the problem throughout the EU because the UK's "effective mechanisms and broad based legal definitions of 'racist incidents' encourage reporting and recording of incidents".<sup>140</sup> In contrast, on its Intercultural Dialogue Country Sheet, France still clings to its 'indivisible' paradigm, insisting that, "France's approach is universalist and "minorities are not recognised as such" and thus, there is "no general authority for Intercultural dialogue".<sup>141</sup> By refusing to collect data on

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<sup>136</sup> Catherine Dupre, "France" in *Fundamental Rights in Europe: The ECHR and its Member States, 1995-2000*, eds. R. Blackburn & J. Polakiewski (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 333.

<sup>137</sup> A comprehensive study of the media is outside this thesis but any search brings up numerous reported incidences of violence, for example – 'Racist attacks against Dutch Muslims on the rise', 05/04/05. [www.islamonline.net](http://www.islamonline.net). 'UK teen killed in racist attack', 31/07/05. [www.theage.com.au](http://www.theage.com.au) 'Islamic centre attacked in Italy', 11/08/07. [www.tvnz.co.nz](http://www.tvnz.co.nz) 'Muslims attacked by rightists in Germany', 22/06/08. [www.earthtimes.org](http://www.earthtimes.org) 'French Muslim war graves defaced', 06/04/08 [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)

<sup>138</sup> See *Trends and Developments on Racism and Xenophobia 1997-2000 on Combating Ethnic and Racial Discrimination and Promoting Equality in the European Union* (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2007).

<sup>139</sup> *Trends and Developments*, 26.

<sup>140</sup> EUMC, "Racism and Xenophobia in the EU Member States: trends, developments and good practice," *EUMC Annual Report 2005 - Summary*, (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Committee, 2006), 17.

<sup>141</sup> Country Sheets, <http://www.interculturaldialogue.eu/web/intercultural-dialogue-country-sheets.php?ai>

ethnicity, member states are not protecting their minorities but instead simply obscuring the facts.<sup>142</sup>

*Dialogue and Community Action.*

In 1957, at the founding of the European Economic Community (EEC), discrimination was only of importance to the extent that it interfered with the process of market integration. The Treaty of Rome contained only two general prohibitions against discrimination. One was on the grounds of nationality under Article 48 EEC (revised to Art. 39 EC) for workers of member states, and the other, at the insistence of the French, a provision on equal pay for men and women for equal work or work of equal value under Article 119 EEC (revised to Art. 141 EC). This limited conception of rights gradually evolved, assisted by the inclusion of Article 13 into the Treaty of Rome by the Treaty of Amsterdam. This allows the Council, “acting unanimously on a proposal from the Commission and after consulting the European Parliament, may take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation”.<sup>143</sup> This resulted in the development of Directives. The EU’s work to promote equality through its Community Action Programme to Combat Discrimination (2001-2006), saw the development of the EU Racial Equality Directive<sup>144</sup> and the Employment Equality Directive<sup>145</sup>. However, although Article 13 of the EC Treaty established a basis for addressing discrimination, these resulting protective legal frameworks remain limited and do not cover key areas where Muslims (and other minorities) experience prejudice – education, housing, access to goods and services, and in their treatment by public officials such as police and immigration officers.<sup>146</sup> Additionally, these Directives are limited by the fact that they are left to the interpretation of member states and “positive action is discretionary rather than mandatory”.<sup>147</sup> Progress is further hampered because the EU does not have legal competence with regard to human

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<sup>142</sup> EUMC, *Annual Report – 2005*, 23.

<sup>143</sup> Treaty of Amsterdam, Official Journal C340 of 10 November 1997.

<sup>144</sup> EC, *Council Directive 2000/43 of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin*, [2000] O.J.L 180/22.

<sup>145</sup> EC, *Council Directive 2000/78 of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation*, [2000] O.J.L 303/16.

<sup>146</sup> Choudhury, “Muslims and Discrimination,” in *European Islam*, 105.

<sup>147</sup> Choudhury, “Muslims and Discrimination,” in *European Islam*, 101.



rights, and is not likely to achieve this in the near future. The challenge for the EU, therefore, is to develop an internal common framework for human rights policies despite this being a sensitive topic.

### *EYID in Action.*

Despite the teleological development of the EU's social policies, the Commission, the Ministry for Education and Culture, and the Council of Europe have tirelessly promoted intercultural dialogue through conferences, exhibitions, debates, inter-city exchanges, film and media, and the field of education, encouraging the exchange of ideas in the promotion of mutual understanding. On May 7, 2008, the Council of Europe released a White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue entitled "Living Together as Equals in Dignity".<sup>148</sup> The White Paper stresses the need to strengthen democratic citizenship, teach intercultural competences, and to create and widen spaces for intercultural dialogue.<sup>149</sup> When the European Commission adopted the EYID proposal in October 2005, it acknowledged the increasing importance of cross-cultural communication:

...the European Union has for many years encouraged intercultural dialogue...However it appears necessary today to respond to the need for a deeper and more structured dialogue of cultures, which would involve not only public authorities but also civil society as a whole.<sup>150</sup>

The events organised for 2008 encompass a wide range of activities at an EU level, national level and community level. An allocated budget of Euro 10 million funded:

- an information campaign raising awareness of EYID objectives
- grants for festivals and sports events at the Community level for youth
- co-financing of actions at national level with a strong European dimension<sup>151</sup>

At the EU level, Brussels hosted seven debates at the Residence Palace during 2008. These debates each featured four guest speakers including Commissioners and Members of the European Parliament as well as various stake-holders from civil society action groups. The topic covered included:

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<sup>148</sup> Accessible via <http://www.coe.int/t/cm>

<sup>149</sup> White Paper, p.2

<sup>150</sup> Accessible via [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/dialogue/dialogue\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/dialogue/dialogue_en.html)

<sup>151</sup> Accessible via [www.europa.eu.rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/1226](http://www.europa.eu.rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/1226)

**Debate 1 - 05 March.**

“Integrating Conversations: The Impact of Migration on Intercultural Dialogue”.

**Debate 2 - 02 April.**

“Negotiating Differences: A Responsibility of Artists and Cultural Institutions”.

**Debate 3 - 14 May.**

“New Horizons: Active Citizenship to Bridge Inter-religious Divides”.

**Debate 4 - 04 June.**

“Couscous Culture: is that what Intercultural Dialogue in the workplace is all about?”

**Debate 5 - 10 September.**

“Multilingualism: A Bridge or Barrier for Intercultural Dialogue?”

**Debate 6 - 01 October.**

“Education: Ready for the Intercultural Exchange?”

**Debate 7 - 05 November.**

“Talking Our Way Out of Trouble: How Media Debate Can Combat Intolerance”.

These debates (analysed in chapter 5) provided an opportunity for in depth discussions on the issues and themes at the core of the immigration story - issues that are relevant to policy makers and EU leaders in their search for a more balanced socio-cultural vision. Alongside the debates, each member state developed a country strategy, incorporating music, drama, writing, art and media. A range of over 84 events covering themes ranging from, Intercultural flavoured coffee (Romania), Let's Meet – difference does not mean alien (Poland), Celebrations of Music in Pecs (Hungary), to What the Religions say about World Peace (Greece) and Writers and Literary Translators Congress (Sweden), all of which can be accessed on the Year of Intercultural Dialogue website.<sup>152</sup>

**Is Intercultural Dialogue Enough?**

Intercultural dialogue could in fact be a powerful medium for promoting difference. The opportunity to interact at the grassroots level is vital to the creation of mutual understanding and to removing fear of the ‘other’. When difference, is experienced through arts, cuisine, fashion, dance, drama and music it is exciting, attractive, and enthralling, and thus, can create a real appreciation of other cultures. Legitimacy and

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<sup>152</sup> Accessible via [www.interculturaldialogue](http://www.interculturaldialogue)

visibility go hand in hand. Visibility of Europe's varied cultures, not only in local communities but also in art galleries, in craft and fashion stores, in restaurants, in the media, on the television and on the radio will result in a legitimisation of their role in the multi-cultured patchwork that constitutes Europe. Despite this positive effect, serious questions remain. How can 'Intercultural flavoured coffee' help disaffected youth living in the *banlieues* in France? What good is promoting understanding if one partner in the dialogue is unemployed, living in substandard housing, with children who are not performing well at school? The EUMC's report on Islamophobia concludes:

Member States need to develop, reinforce and evaluate policies aimed at delivering equality and non-discrimination for Muslim communities, particularly in the fields of employment, education, and access to goods and services.<sup>153</sup>

The EU's strong political vision has been consistently hampered by a social vision that remains obfuscated and inconsistent. A vision beleaguered by the attempts of individual member states to jealousy guard national interests. Although, in 1991 Maastricht introduced the concept of a 'social Europe', the EU still has no clear pan-European strategy for dealing with the problems arising from Europe's increasing culture diversity. Each member state has struggled separately with immigration and the problems of integration, developing disparate paths, thus further complicating the picture. Consequently, ongoing cultural unrest involving Europe's diverse minorities continues to reflect the failure of multiculturalism and integration. Long aware of a 'cultural gap' the EU institutions have flirted with this concept of a 'social Europe' for nearly two decades. It has been a difficult relationship affected by the ongoing intergovernmental versus supranational debate that has dogged the integration process since its inception. While the member states have gradually subsumed more and more of their state sovereignty to the EU institutions in order to further economic and political progress, they have remained staunchly protective of social policies, especially those regarding immigration and integration. This has led to individual member states implementing different policies regarding immigrants, creating not just disparities between residents within states but also disparities across states.

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<sup>153</sup> EUMC *Islamophobia*, 108.

Essentially Europe was a geographical term not a cultural term; the close proximity of nation-states necessitated an economic and political association to prevent further destruction. While creating an extremely successful economic bloc, the EU has not succeeded in creating a European socio-cultural identity bonded by a common set of principles. While the EU has challenged the traditional unitary model of citizenship by replacing it with a new style multi-country citizenship, this has not resulted in a new multi-ethnic EU identity. The most pressing problem for the architects of the new Europe is to create an inclusionary EU identity incorporating more than just Judeo-Christian principles. For Muslims this necessitates an intercultural dialogue with Islam resulting in the development of a form of European identity and citizenship that is inclusive of their Islamic identity as well.<sup>154</sup> As Roy argues, “What is at stake is more the reconstruction or recasting of a lost identity...” which is in danger of being attracted to Islamic extremism as Muslim youth seek to reconcile the opposing cultural systems of western marginalisation and traditional Islam.<sup>155</sup> Intercultural dialogue with an emphasis on recognising, accepting and affirming the ‘other’ can reduce policy disparities and reconcile opposing cultural systems. By legitimising minority cultures and imbuing them with the same status as ‘national’ cultures Europe can enlarge the ‘space’ presently allocated to minorities, and change the emphasis, from one of exclusion to inclusion. Depending on the capacity of Europe’s ‘cultural sponge’ to accommodate difference, can Algerian Muslims, Turkish Muslims, Pakistani Muslims become French, German or British or simply Europeans?<sup>156</sup>

In New York on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2008, Tony Blair launched the ‘Faith Foundation’, which is committed to “developing better understanding between faiths”.<sup>157</sup> In his opening speech Blair stated, “Religious faith will be of the same significance to the 21<sup>st</sup> century as political ideology was to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.”<sup>158</sup> Regardless of whether the Faith Foundation achieves its aims or not, religious faith will, no doubt, continue

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<sup>154</sup> Nezar AlSayyad, “Muslim Europe or Euro-Islam: On the Discourses of Identity and Culture”, in *Muslim Europe or Euro-Islam: Politics, Culture, And Citizenship In The Age Of Globalization*, eds. Nezar AlSayyad and Manuel Castells (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2002), 20.

<sup>155</sup> Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 315.

<sup>156</sup> Wharton, “Prospects and Challenges,” 6.

<sup>157</sup> Tom Baldwin, “Religion is a force for good – Blair.” *The Times*, Washington, quoted in *The Christchurch Press* 31 May, 2008, B2.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid*, B2.

to pose challenges to the future of secular Europe. The important question of this millennium being, can the place of religious faith in Europe's future be resolved through intercultural and inter-religious dialogue? In his book, *The European Dream*, Jeremy Rifkin writes:

The European Union is the first governing experiment to attempt an accommodation between the new forces of individuation and integration that are stretching human consciousness inward to the multiple identities of the post-modern persona and outward to the globalizing forces of the economy.<sup>159</sup>

This 'stretching' necessitates a re-conceptualization of 'European Identity'.

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<sup>159</sup> Jeremy Rifkin, *The European Dream: How Europe's Vision of the Future is Quietly Eclipsing the American Dream* (New York: Penguin Books Ltd, 2004), 282

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **EUROPEAN IDENTITY.**

“If identities are mutually exclusive, Europe is an impossible project”.

Ulrich Beck<sup>160</sup>

#### **Introduction.**

For the ‘majority’ of the EU’s 490 million people, their sense of belonging stems from the land of their birth and their familial community. For the ‘minority’, however, the question of belonging can be a traumatic one, even though minorities have resided in Europe for centuries. Europe’s history is not one of a monoculture but rather it forms a richly woven tapestry of contrasting cultures, religions, and political systems – a smorgasbord reflected in art, architecture and cuisine, interlaced with a chorus of diverse voices. Europe’s tapestry is criss-crossed by multiple borders of time, space and meaning, which have shifted according to the ebb and flow of religious and political energies.<sup>161</sup> Modern Europe, therefore, represents the culmination of centuries of cross-pollination and interpenetration of these ‘diverse voices’, resulting in a political and cultural hybrid.<sup>162</sup> Despite its hybrid nature, however, the European narrative has been one of a majority culture favoured over and above its minorities. Thus, while Europe would now celebrate its diversity, unity remains elusive, relying on the stretching of a ‘European identity’ that can correlatively recognise and accommodate its minorities. Since belonging is rooted in identity, and identity, ultimately constructed in opposition, the challenge for the EU is to create a ‘common identity’ based on a mutually inclusive dialogue that enables a ‘self’ identification with the ‘other’. The challenge is to create a ‘homeland’ in which a sense of belonging is not boundary driven but is open to all, regardless of ethnicity, religion and colour.

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<sup>160</sup> Beck, 35.

<sup>161</sup> Krzysztof Pomian, “European Diversity, Present and Future” in *Diversity and Culture*, ed. Kristeva, 57.

<sup>162</sup> Ali Rattansi, *Racism, Modernity and Identity: On The Western Front*, eds. Ali Rattansi and Sallie Westwood (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 146.

There is a new emphasis by academics and theorists on the construction of a collective cosmopolitan identity in Europe “neither emotional, nor passionate” that is “founded less on memory than on reason”.<sup>163</sup> A reason, that acknowledges “both equality and difference at the same time” whilst based on a commitment to humanity per se.<sup>164</sup> Cosmopolitanism is not a new idea, and some academics would dismiss it as Utopian.<sup>165</sup> However, it provides a meeting place for dialogue, for possibilities, for inclusion, and it therefore deserves debate. Any discussion of identity is problematic because identity itself is not a fixed, immutable object. Whether it be scrutinised through a psychological, philosophical, sociological, historical or political lens, identity appears fluid, ever changing and increasingly fragmented.<sup>166</sup> As complex as the human physiology itself, identity weaves its way through and around the social sciences, both affecting, and affected by, these spheres. Whilst this chapter is primarily concerned with the construction of a European identity that can accommodate Europe’s Muslim population, identity in Europe, personal or otherwise, is always influenced, not only by historical events but also by the political, social and cultural spheres that are presently moulding the ‘new Europe’, including the affects of globalisation. Thus, any analysis of a European identity necessitates the adoption of a multi-layered framework looking at historical and political factors as well as societal influences. It also necessitates a discussion on the concept of what identity is.

This chapter begins with a brief examination of the primordialist versus constructivist debate concerning the theoretical structure of identity. It will then trace the formation of collective identity as constructed by the nation-state and the affect of collective identities on Europe’s minority cultures. Thirdly, it will examine the idea of an identity ‘crisis’ brought about by the de-centring affects of globalisation, followed by an analysis of the argument for a cosmopolitan European identity, and the role of the EU as an identity builder. This thesis argues, that if there is to be any kind of ‘unity’ within the ‘diversity’, there is a need for the EU to develop a European identity that transcends not only national borders, but also the more difficult borders of colour, difference and otherness. Using the word ‘develop’ presupposes a constructivist

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<sup>163</sup> Dominique Schnapper, “Memory and Identity,” 16.

<sup>164</sup> Beck, 45.

<sup>165</sup> Schlesinger, “A Cosmopolitan Temptation,” <http://ejc.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/22/4/413>

<sup>166</sup> Stuart Hall, “Introduction: Who Needs ‘Identity?’” in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, eds. Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (London: Sage Publications, 1996), 4.

approach as opposed to a primordialist approach and indeed this is the path that this chapter adopts, arguing that identity, whether personal, cultural, social or collective/political, is always constructed.

### Primordialism versus Constructivism.

Primordialists argue that identity is a ‘fixed inner core’ that emerges at birth and remains essentially the same throughout a person’s life.<sup>167</sup> This inner core is something intrinsic within human beings, an essential part that denies “the identity’s social and historical construction”.<sup>168</sup> Constructivists, on the other hand, posit that identities are relational and always incomplete, being shaped and reshaped in response to circumstance and interaction with others – whether personal or institutional – constructing meaning through experience.<sup>169</sup> Primordialists like Herder (1744-1803) stressed the link between thought and language. Language was the expression of thought and because language differed between communities, it demonstrated that different communities think differently. This difference, he argued, was inherent and unchangeable. Thus, Herder saw cultural groups as ‘closed spheres’ forever separated from other cultures by linguistic and territorial boundaries. For Geertz also, “the primordial bonds of blood, speech, custom and so on, are seen to have an ineffable and at times overpowering coerciveness in and of themselves”.<sup>170</sup> Huntington’s provocative book echoes this view, by positing the unavoidability of a clash between world civilisations separated by primordial differences. He argues, “[F]or peoples seeking identity and reinventing ethnicity, enemies are essential, and the potentially most dangerous enmities occur across the fault lines between the world’s major civilizations”.<sup>171</sup> Primordialism therefore limits identity to intrinsic unchangeable characteristics dichotomously united by innate hostility.

Conversely, constructivists do not see identity in any form as absolute, concrete and indivisible. Rather identity is malleable, fluid and composite. Identity is always a work in progress in which hereditary and environmental factors collide and collaborate in its design. As Amin Malouf writes, “[e]ven sex and colour are not

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<sup>167</sup> Stuart Hall, “The Question of Cultural Identity,” in *Modernity and its Futures*, eds. Stuart Hall, David Held and Tony McGrew (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 275.

<sup>168</sup> Chimisso, 40.

<sup>169</sup> Chimisso, 40.

<sup>170</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation Of Culture*, (New York: Basic Books Inc., 1973), 259.

<sup>171</sup> Huntington, 20.



“absolute” ingredients of identity” for “[t]o be born a girl is not the same in Kabul as in Oslo” and “[t]o be born black is a different matter for some one in New York, or Pretoria”.<sup>172</sup> For Meyer, identity “is not a possession but a social process” only becoming effective when the individual recognises him/herself in the image reflected back by his/her peers.<sup>173</sup> Thus, identities are sources of meaning and a catalyst for belonging, constructed by the internalisation of “negotiations and arrangements between individuals” and “by norms structured by the institutions and organisations of society”.<sup>174</sup> Identities are shaped in the crucible of experience. Though often regarded as immutable, particularly in relation to the ‘other’, both personal and collective identities are vulnerable to evolutionary processes and change over time.<sup>175</sup>

In a time of increasing uncertainty, is it possible to reach back and retrieve a primordial essence – a fixed inner core – that can provide stability and comfort? On the other hand, can identity only transcend time and space (wars and globalisation) because it is fluid, multi-layered, constructed, decentred, fragmented and re-constructed? This thesis argues for a constructivist approach because whilst acknowledging that identity is, to varying degrees, constructed in opposition, constructivism allows for a more inclusive universal or cosmopolitan identity, which encompasses diverse cultures, meaning that identities can be constructed ‘with’. Primordialism, on the other hand argues that identities can only be constructed ‘against’. The question for Europe ultimately being, is it possible to construct a European identity that can safely steer 490 million multi-cultural, multi-lingual, people of differing faiths, into the next millennium?

### What is Identity?

The concept of identity, in this paper, is that ‘kernel’ within human beings that develops in an ever-changing tripartite relationship, involving the internal, with the familial culture (tradition, religion, language and locality) and the wider society (all other external forces). It is fluid, multi-layered and mouldable – constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed over time according to experience. It is capable of

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<sup>172</sup> Amin Maalouf, *In The Name of Identity: Violence and the Need to Belong* (New York: Penguin Books, 2000), 23-4.

<sup>173</sup> Meyer, *Identity Mania*, 15.

<sup>174</sup> Castells, 7.

<sup>175</sup> Chimisso, 29.

being both, progressive and regressive, open and closed, expansive and fundamental. Identity in all its guises – political/collective, social, religious or cultural - always begins at home. The self is born into a familial landscape incorporating location, language and religious influences, which set the cultural context.<sup>176</sup> Within this landscape, allegiance to these influences is variously absorbed according to their perceived importance. For some (practising Muslims or Christian fundamentalists) religion is so tightly woven into the cultural context it is almost impossible to separate belief from self, and for others (Christmas and Easter churchgoers) religion is a cloak, to be worn or discarded at will. Anthony Giddens argues that, “self-identity is not a distinctive trait possessed by the individual”.<sup>177</sup> Rather it is the understanding of self, set within the context of ‘biography’ – within the context of one’s cultural background. According to Meyer, this cultural background is itself “a construct just like the keys on a typewriter”.<sup>178</sup> Identity is also constructed and understood within the context of one’s political background. As Meyer argues, it is the ‘political instrumentalization’ of cultural identities (resulting in the promotion of fundamentalism) that leads to conflict rather than inherent cultural differences per se.<sup>179</sup> The danger facing post-modernity is that fundamentalism offers a sense of purpose and a sense of belonging for those marginalised by majority identifications.<sup>180</sup> For this reason identity, which is synonymous with belonging is as important issue for Europe’s future.

### Enlightenment to Modernity.

The Enlightenment period stirred an awakening, which recognised the importance of the individual rational being “over and above his place in a rigid hierarchical society”.<sup>181</sup> European culture, essentially founded on universal rights and equality, stems from Rene Descartes’ (1596-1650) concept of a rational being whose sense of self stands independent without the need of others.<sup>182</sup> However, ‘Cartesian identity’ bestowed at birth, remained static, ignoring the affect of the external, and ultimately

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<sup>176</sup> Geertz, 14.

<sup>177</sup> Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 53.

<sup>178</sup> Meyer, *Identity Mania*, xii.

<sup>179</sup> Meyer, *Identity Mania*, 56.

<sup>180</sup> Zygmunt Bauman, *Identity*, 87.

<sup>181</sup> Hall, *Modernity and its Futures*, 283.

<sup>182</sup> Chimisso, 10.

privileging white, middle-class males over and above all others who were different or ‘deviant’.<sup>183</sup> This ‘privileging’ has remained a European trademark in the majority/minority tussle. Enlightenment also introduced the idea of progress, which was fundamental to the way Europeans interpreted history and their place in it. It led to a belief that they were united in the search for a better future and this was reinforced by the nation-state, which promised to provide security and progress in return for allegiance.

Modernity saw an emphasis on the nation-state as welfare provider inducing a loyalty to the state and to a ‘common people’ connected through territory and shared history. It brought an awareness of the affect of relationship on the formation of identity. People were social beings and their identity formation resulted from the interaction between the personal and the public. As Stuart Hall argues, the sociological subject’s essence was “modified in a continuous dialogue with the surrounding cultural worlds.”<sup>184</sup> Identity fused the internal and external, acting as a suture, anchoring the “subject into the structure”.<sup>185</sup> However, a symptom of modern societies is one of “constant, rapid and permanent change marked by discontinuities” in which changing societal landscapes result in increasing fragmentation.<sup>186</sup> Identities once considered fixed, essential and permanent have become fluid, complex and ephemeral. Where once sociologists argued that identities reflected a common experience providing a united people with “stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning” now it is widely recognised that “cultural identity is a matter of ‘becoming’ as well as ‘being’”.<sup>187</sup> In a world where identity is no longer secured by working for the same company for forty years, and careers now change as often as clothes, ‘becoming’ is fraught with anxiety. For many the act of becoming is unsettling, more especially for immigrants who find their traditional points of reference do not make sense in their new ‘homeland’ and efforts to fit in, meet with a studied indifference. As Julia Kristeva writes:

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<sup>183</sup> Chimisso, p. 13

<sup>184</sup> Hall, *Modernity and its Futures*, 276.

<sup>185</sup> Hall, *Modernity and its Futures*, 276.

<sup>186</sup> Hall, *Modernity and its Futures*, 276.

<sup>187</sup> Stuart Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathon Rutherford (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), 223-225.

Nowhere is one *more* a foreigner than in France...[because France] rejects the notion of difference and sets aside for the foreigner a solitary curiosity, the weird charms of which soon prove to be a source of scorn.<sup>188</sup>

While the nation-state attempts to infuse a loyalty and sense of belonging among those born within its territorial boundaries, this is coupled with a suspicion of those who come from outside. ‘Difference’ has no place in the ‘imagined community’ of nationalism.

### *Identity, Nationalism and Minorities.*

A political community exists only if legitimated by its people. Within certain territorial parameters, nation-states undertook to provide the staples of life and in return demanded an allegiance from their citizens. As protector of the people the nation-state, became a major source of collective identification. Benedict Anderson examines the creation of a collective identity by the nation-state. Taking a constructivist approach, he acknowledges that identities vary across time and space because identity construction incorporates a reciprocal dynamic. Thus, group identities both change, and conversely are changed by, the societal conditions of the day. Anderson coins the term ‘imagined community’ to describe the phenomena of nation-ness.<sup>189</sup> A nation, he writes, is an imagined political community – a community socially constructed and ultimately imagined by the people who perceive themselves to be part of that community. A community that is ‘imagined’ because the members of even the smallest nation will never know even a tiny percentage of their fellows yet they imagined themselves united, with a common identity.<sup>190</sup> Despite inequalities that exist in all nations, the nation is imagined as having a “deep horizontal comradeship” for which people are even willing to sacrifice their lives.<sup>191</sup> This imagined community, argues Anderson, is a cultural construct based on perceived ‘natural ties’ – parentage, birth, skin-colour, language and an alleged connection to the land.<sup>192</sup> It is a construct promoted through communication systems like the media, and unifying symbols, and it is the protection of this ‘imagined

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<sup>188</sup> Kristeva, 30.

<sup>189</sup> Anderson, 3.

<sup>190</sup> Anderson, 6.

<sup>191</sup> Anderson, 7.

<sup>192</sup> Anderson, 143.

community' that underpins the ethos of nationalism. Nationalism is fuelled by the belief that the community must be protected from the 'other' – protected from those who are different and who, because of their difference, threaten the status quo. Hall agrees, arguing that because collective identities are constructed within 'discourse' they "are more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion, than the sign of a naturally constituted entity".<sup>193</sup> Not only are they constructed in opposition to those outside their territorial boundaries, they also deny difference within. Foreigners are different and therefore inherently incapable of belonging. Consider George Mikes comment in his children's book, *How to be an Alien*:

It is a shame and bad taste to be an alien...A criminal may improve and become a decent member of society...A foreigner cannot improve...He may become British; he can never become English.<sup>194</sup>

Nationalism is rooted in territory, yet those born within the territory, from foreign parents also remain outsiders. Nationalism is as much about classifications (race, colour, ethnicity) as it is about *jus solis*. Hence, its intolerance of minorities.

The worst excesses of nationalism remain engraved forever on Europe's soul. The EU is testament to the desire to prevent any further wars on European soil but virulent nationalism lingers still. According to Kristeva, the end of the Cold War effected a new identification with origins.<sup>195</sup> The late 1980s, early 1990s saw a rise in neo-Nazi groups across Eastern Europe and Germany alongside an increase in popularity for the Front National in France.<sup>196</sup> Jean Le Pen's party played on the fear of those who felt threatened by increasing immigration numbers, promising to halt immigration and to protect the rights of the 'French citizen'. Nationalism, while framed within a political ideology, is based on a cultural ideology, which arouses passionate defence when that culture (imagined community) is threatened. In 1973, a massive outburst of racist violence, spurred by high unemployment, spread across France. Politicians campaigning for the 1974 elections (Le Pen included) were quick to blame immigration policies and, by association, immigrants for these conflicts and the new

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<sup>193</sup> Hall, *Questions of Cultural Identity*, 4

<sup>194</sup> George Mikes, *How to be an Alien* (London: Wingate Publishers, 1946), 8.

<sup>195</sup> See Julia Kristeva, *Nations Without Nationalism*, translated by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

<sup>196</sup> The Front National led by Jean-Marie Le Pen, though founded in October 1972 only rose in popularity during the late 1980s, early 1990s on the platform of anti-immigration policies.

government reacted by halting immigration. They portrayed the problem not in terms of the discriminatory practices that disadvantaged Muslim youth and needed changing, but as being directly attributable to immigrants, who threatened the ‘French community’.

Thus, modernity’s emphasis on nationalism as the ultimate identification presents an obstacle to millions of refugees and migrants. Minorities suffer under nationalism because its paradigmatic nature reinforces the strength of the majority through weakening the ‘other’. Bauman explains that nationalism “demands unequivocal allegiance and exclusive fidelity” and does not recognise nor accommodate opposition.<sup>197</sup> Therefore, “nationalism denies the empirical reality of Europe” because while Europe may not as yet be fully united in its diversity it is, and has been for centuries, a ‘unit’ of diversity just as the individual nation-states themselves have always been ‘units’ of diversity.<sup>198</sup> Minorities thus challenge the core of nationalism by their very presence, by their visible difference. France prides itself on the strict separation between church and state and the refusal to recognise minorities – resulting in an indivisible and *laïque* society. *Laïcité*, which bans the wearing of religious dress in public spaces forces France’s Muslims to be invisible, begging the question, can France only be ‘indivisible’ by forcing its minorities to be ‘invisible’?

The problem with French-style Republicanism is that you are accepted as long as you fit a certain mould. As soon as you have something that comes from outside you are no longer viewed as entirely French. You are suspicious.<sup>199</sup>

In recent years many EU member states, have been squeezed between the immigration dilemma on one side, and the increasing demands of European integration on the other, resulting in a ‘national identity crisis’. Immigrants not only compete for jobs, housing and social benefits but also challenge the strict separation between the church and the state, a right passionately fought for in many EU states. Thus, any attempt purposeful or otherwise, to confuse the demarcation lines between church and state cause anxiety. Perceived challenges to the status quo from Muslims

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<sup>197</sup> Bauman, *Identity*, 22.

<sup>198</sup> Beck, 41.

<sup>199</sup> Samia Amara, (23) youth worker near Paris. BBC News, [www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/4376500.stm](http://www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/4376500.stm)

who sometimes turn to their religious organisations to meet their physical needs prompted defensive responses from a Liberal Party (D166) Councillor in Utrecht.

The laws of the Moroccan-man are interwoven with their religion, well that is a problem... We keep church and state separate and I consider that an acquired right that should not be changed.<sup>200</sup>

When under threat – perceived or real – all identities regress behind a defensive shield, blaming the immigrant for any problem, and often resorting to the ‘if you do not like our ways, then go home’ response. This is the case irrespective of whether the ‘immigrant’ was born in the EU or is a legal citizen, and this response arises in both the big issues (free speech in the Denmark ‘cartoon affair’) and the seemingly innocuous. In Scotland, the ‘police puppy in the hat campaign’ caused offense to Muslim shopkeepers because dogs are considered unclean in some Muslim countries like Pakistan and India – the traditional homeland of the shopkeepers.<sup>201</sup> Many Scottish people were equally offended by the rejection of ‘man’s best friend’. Their vitriolic responses on various websites, however, showed a disproportionate response to the concern of the Muslim shopkeepers, and are indicative of the intolerance spawned by nationalism. Comments such as if “Muslims don’t like Scottish customs then ...[go] back to your stone-age countries” and “If they want to live in England/Scotland/Europe they should assimilate themselves to the culture and not impose their stone-age non-sense on others” reinforce the Us and Them attitude endemic to territorial identification.<sup>202</sup> Kristeva comments that these ‘national identity crises’ exacerbate:

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<sup>200</sup> J. Feirabend, & J. Rath, “Making a place for Islam in politics: local authorities dealing with Islamic associations”, in W. Shadid and P. van Koningsveld eds. *Muslims in the Margin: Political Responses to the Presence of Islam in Europe* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1996), 254-255, cited in Chimisso, 190.

<sup>201</sup> On the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2008, the Tayside Police in Dundee, Scotland apologised to Islamic leaders for causing offence over an advertising campaign. A number of postcards containing a photograph of a black puppy (Rebel) sitting in a police hat alongside the new non-emergency police phone number were distributed to local shops. Many of the local Muslim shopkeepers (mainly Pakistani and Indian) refused to have the postcards in their shops. The Tayside police apologised to the Muslim community admitting they had made an error in not consulting their ‘diversity officer’ first. Accessed 26/07/08, via <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2229719/Apology-over-‘offensive’-puppy-police-advert-after-Muslim-complaints.html>

<sup>202</sup> Complaints about Rebel <http://islamineurope.blogspot.com/2008/07/Scotland-Muslims-upset-about-dog-in.html>

the ups and downs of the identity struggle that human beings have been waging forever, one that henceforth has lost its ideological masks and is being carried out protected only by a shield of origins.<sup>203</sup>

As Will Kymlicka posits, “political life has an inescapably national dimension” which naturally favours the majority.<sup>204</sup> Therefore without a sincere attempt to accommodate minority peoples “talk of ‘treating people as individuals’ is itself a cover for ethnic and national injustice”.<sup>205</sup> Thus, whenever disagreements erupt into racial conflict the ‘nation’ ultimately sides with the majority, highlighting the fact that the issue of racist violence is also situated within a political framework. Rob Witte argues that once racist violence is acknowledged as a social problem by the state it is then put on the political agenda and states react in one of two ways – ‘including recognition’ or ‘excluding recognition’.<sup>206</sup> If the group, facing discrimination is a valuable part of society (inclusion), the discrimination or violence is treated as an attack on society at large, and the state will put policies in place to deal with it. Conversely if the group discriminated against (usually a minority) are considered to be to blame (exclusion), policies will be directed against the minority group – the Roma, the Basque, the Muslim.

Kristeva argues that unless one regresses in order to transcend, the ‘shield of origins’ (nationalism) becomes but a ‘hate reaction’.<sup>207</sup> A defensive hatred, which rejects all ‘others’ or, conversely, a hatred of self inevitably caused by a rejection of one’s roots.<sup>208</sup> Rather than searching for solace behind the shield of nationalism, Kristeva, a self-confessed cosmopolitan, argues for tolerance and commonality based on Montesquieu’s *esprit general*.<sup>209</sup> A theory “more concerned with respect for the *other*, more watchful of citizens rights...more concerned with individual strangeness”.<sup>210</sup> *Esprit general* advocates the integration of the individual and the ‘other’ within a higher body, which not only values each person but also gives

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<sup>203</sup> Kristeva, 1-2.

<sup>204</sup> Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, 194.

<sup>205</sup> Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, 194.

<sup>206</sup> Rob Witte, “Racist Violence: An Issue of the Political Agenda,” in *Racist Violence in Europe*, eds. Tore Bjorgo and Rob Witte, (New York: St Martins Press, Inc., 1993), 149.

<sup>207</sup> Kristeva, 2.

<sup>208</sup> Kristeva, 3.

<sup>209</sup> Kristeva, 28-31.

<sup>210</sup> Kristeva, 46-7.



sustenance to their difference by providing a ‘guaranteed hierarchy of private rights’.<sup>211</sup> Since, ultimately, all are but strangers, this form of nation-hood, Kristeva posits, could well provide the longed-for commonality uniting individuals both “different and free”.<sup>212</sup> Thus with *esprit general* it is possible to “bring together the national and the cosmopolitan without erasing national boundaries” for national boundaries will continue to remain important as a stabilising force in this fast changing world – both within and without the EU”.<sup>213</sup>

### Identity and Globalisation.

Among its many affects, globalisation has sparked a renewed interest in the concept of identity. Old identities, which ‘stabilised’ the social world have been displaced through the fragmentation of the “cultural landscapes of class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity race and nationality” resulting in a ‘crisis of identity’.<sup>214</sup> If the problem for modernity was how to construct a strong national identity, the problem for postmodernity is the opposite. As Bauman writes, “In the case of identity...the catchword of modernity was creation: the catchword of postmodernity is recycling”.<sup>215</sup> For the postmodern person finds themselves in a world “with disposable products designed for immediate obsolescence” where “identities can be adapted and discarded like a change of costume”.<sup>216</sup> In this world of no boundaries, everyone becomes a stranger and life is, reduced to a “*journey* through a foreign land”.<sup>217</sup> While the pilgrim has always accepted that he is a ‘stranger in a strange land’ and has always known that “the truth is elsewhere: the true place is always some distance, some time away” the postmodern wanderer is dislocated and disorientated.<sup>218</sup> As transience becomes a permanent affliction the immigrant finds themselves in ‘double danger’ of either “falling in between two cultures...[or] falling into the abysses of modernity” forever without a ‘home’.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> Kristeva, 31.

<sup>212</sup> Kristeva, 47.

<sup>213</sup> Kristeva, 32.

<sup>214</sup> Hall, *Modernity and Its Futures*, 274.

<sup>215</sup> Zygmunt Bauman, “From Pilgrim to Tourist - or a Short History of Identity,” in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, eds. Stuart Hall & Paul du Gay (London: Sage Publications, 1996), 18.

<sup>216</sup> Lasch, 34, 38.

<sup>217</sup> Santayana, George, “The Philosophy of Travel,” in *The Birth of Reason and Other Essay's*, ed. D. Cory (London: Columbia University Press, 1985), 5.

<sup>218</sup> Bauman, “From Pilgrim,” 20

<sup>219</sup> Bo Strath, “A European Identity: To the Historical Limits of a Concept,” in *European Journal of Social Theory* 5, no.4 (2002): 399.

Giddens writes, “Modern institutions differ from all preceding forms of social order in respect of their dynamism, the degree to which they undercut traditional habits and customs, and their global impact”.<sup>220</sup> These external institutions radically alter the daily experience of social life. The more globalisation impacts on self-identity, the more tradition (one’s cultural foundation) loses its hold. Giddens argues that late modernity effects a tension between the internal and external in which ‘globalising influences’ compete with traditional forces causing a ‘reflexive’ re-structuring of self-identity.<sup>221</sup> A re-structuring in which individuals find themselves confronted with an ever-increasing diversity of ‘lifestyle choices’ from which they must choose.<sup>222</sup> Choice, however, is only for the elite, the outwardly mobile who can smoothly transcend time and space, moving between the local and the global with apparent ease. As Castells argues, only the elite have the ability to master the disjunction between the global and the local.<sup>223</sup> For the rest “[A] chooser life is an insecure life” and insecurity leads to vulnerability.<sup>224</sup>

Trapped on a journey that gathers speed with every passing decade, in a chameleon world where nothing is static and everything is disposable, because it can be synthetically, mechanically or technologically reproduced the postmodern person searches for the concrete, the absolute, the solid. He/she wanders in a world where the real is obscured by the hyper-real, the original is swallowed by the simulacrum, and where values and identities change moment by moment. In a world in which progress is measured by the global expansion of McDonalds, shopping malls and theme parks, identification with cultural roots is complicated by the fact that “everywhere is made up of everywhere else – a polycentric anagram” and the authentic is even more elusive.<sup>225</sup> Thus, ‘belonging’ and ‘identity’ are no longer secure. Instead, they are “eminently negotiable and revocable”.<sup>226</sup> If one belongs, they do not question their identity – it is only in the face of uncertainty that identity becomes an issue. Hence, Bauman argues that globalisation has inflicted a ‘liquid modernity’ on humanity,

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<sup>220</sup> Giddens, 1.

<sup>221</sup> Giddens, 5.

<sup>222</sup> Giddens, 5.

<sup>223</sup> Castells, 11.

<sup>224</sup> Bauman, *Identity*, 86.

<sup>225</sup> Pico Iyer, *The Global Soul* (New York: Knopf, 2000), 11.

<sup>226</sup> Bauman, *Identity*, 11.

resulting in individual lives “cut into a succession of ill-connected episodes”.<sup>227</sup> Where once the nation-state offered a ‘modicum of security for its own’, liquid modernity challenges old identifications for all.

For the majority “the search for meaning takes place...in the reconstruction of defensive identities around communal principles”, and thus identity building “revolves essentially around the principle of *resistance identities*”.<sup>228</sup> Castells argues that these identities are culturally constructed, based on the raw materials moulded by external forces into “defensive identities that function as refuge and solidarity, to protect against a hostile, outside world”.<sup>229</sup> Hall concurs, positing that the dislocating of national identities simultaneously produces a trend towards a ‘global homogenisation’ while reinforcing the resurgence of nationalism, ethnicity and fundamentalism.<sup>230</sup> Hall cites the increase in nationalism in Eastern Europe and the rise of fundamentalism as evidence of an attempt to “reconstruct purified identities, to restore coherence, ‘closure’ and Tradition, in the face of hybridity and diversity”.<sup>231</sup> If, however, security can only be provided by ‘closed cultural spheres’ resulting in mutually exclusive identities, what hope for Europe?

### Identity and Cosmopolitanism.

The idea of a cosmopolitan society traces back to the ancient Greeks. When Diogenes the Cynic stated, “I am a citizen of the world” he rejected the proclivity for divisions of birth, gender, class and status, choosing to indentify himself in universalistic terms.<sup>232</sup> By definition, cosmopolitan means all of humanity belongs to a single moral community but unlike universalism, cosmopolitanism does not seek to ‘dissolve difference’ by replacing it with one unified norm.<sup>233</sup> It also differs from nationalism, which (because of its territorial foundation) strives to dissolve internal disparities by highlighting external ones, and, as history constantly reminds us, nationalism all too often leads to the dissolution of internal differences only through the promotion of

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<sup>227</sup> Bauman, *Identity*, 13.

<sup>228</sup> Castells, 11 & 66 respectively.

<sup>229</sup> Castells, 65.

<sup>230</sup> Hall, *Modernity*, 311.

<sup>231</sup> Hall, *Modernity*, 311.

<sup>232</sup> Martha C. Nussbaum, Martha, “Kant and Stoic Cosmopolitanism” in *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 5, no.1 (1997): 5.

<sup>233</sup> Beck, 28.

hierarchical subordination – majority rule.<sup>234</sup> Martha Nussbaum comments that the failure of nationalism has prompted some postmodern theorists to look for inspiration from the past in the hope of developing an:

alternative paradigm for our own political lives, one based less on reason and more on communal solidarity, less on principle and more on affiliation, less on optimising for progress than on a sober acknowledgement of human finitude and mortality.<sup>235</sup>

For Ulrich Beck, cosmopolitanism affirms that which universalism and nationalism both exclude, because it does not try to ‘dissolve difference’. Instead, it aims for the “*recognition of difference*”, both collectively and individually.<sup>236</sup> Aware of the divisiveness of politics, which seek to classify people in terms of ‘us’ and ‘them’, Stoic Cosmopolitanism emphasised the idea of an ‘empathetic understanding’ - the concept that people are ‘born to work together’.<sup>237</sup> Life in and of itself is a unifying factor – a commonality shared by all and to empathize is to cross over and experience the other’s struggle. Jeremy Rifkin argues that whereas universal human rights, is the “new legal code of behaviour”, empathy, is the “new social glue” necessary to transcend difference.<sup>238</sup> According to David Beetham, the common needs of subsistence, security and respect coupled with common threats, “justify the claim that the human rights agenda is universal”.<sup>239</sup> Emmanuel Kant adopted Stoic ideas in his essay *Perpetual Peace* (1795) believing that *Jus Cosmopolitan* was a guiding principle, morally founded on the principle of universal hospitality. In *The Passions*, Kant remarks in Hobbseian tones, “War...does not require any particular kind of motivation, for it seems to be ingrained in human nature”.<sup>240</sup> *Jus Cosmopolitan*, he argued, would protect people from war by essentially protecting them from themselves. The rise in religious fundamentalism and neo-Nazi sentiment in recent years, however, suggests that Europe is not quite ready for *Jus Cosmopolitan*. As

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<sup>234</sup> Beck, 28.

<sup>235</sup> Nussbaum, 1.

<sup>236</sup> Beck, 29.

<sup>237</sup> Nussbaum, 9.

<sup>238</sup> Rifkin, 272.

<sup>239</sup> David Beetham, “Human Rights as a Model for Cosmopolitan Democracy,” in *Re-imaging Political Community: Studies in Cosmopolitan Democracy*, eds. Daniele Archibugi, David Held, Martin Kohler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 60.

<sup>240</sup> Emmanuel Kant, *Kant: Political Writings* ed. Hans Reiss, translation by H. B. Nisbett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1991), 111, cited in Nussbaum, 18.

Nussbaum warns, “Cosmopolitanism seems to be in grave jeopardy...[because] we see so many regions falling prey to ethnic and religious and social conflict...”.<sup>241</sup>

Why does the EU need a cosmopolitan approach? To achieve any sort of unity in diversity Europe needs to provide a model of identification for its multi-ethnic society, a ‘public space’ in which identity is not constructed in opposition but is constructed in conjunction. Marginalisation, the by-product of modernity’s obsession with defining identities in relation to the other, threatens the European project<sup>242</sup>. Ian Ward argues that Europe must adopt a post-modern approach to ‘otherness’, an approach that incorporates ‘humane’ human rights.<sup>243</sup> Ward’s argument is not for cosmopolitanism by name. Rather he argues that the EU needs to address what he terms ‘other Europeans’, those marginalised by the system of nation-states. He suggests that the EU’s “procedures for controlling immigration flows are essentially extra-legal, and themselves in breach of Community and international law”.<sup>244</sup> Since immigration and asylum policies “remain essentially in the preserve of the nation-state, both individually and in their intergovernmental capacity” immigrants remain a pawn, reduced to a ‘means to an end’ in capitalist societies.<sup>245</sup> The main danger of exclusionary practices for Ward is that all too often “The exclusion of the other from the legal process was always the first symbolic step, because the taking away of legal rights from any individual represented the removal of legal rights for all”.<sup>246</sup> More than 10 million third country nationals who are legal residents of the EU but are not eligible for citizenship reinforce the perception of discriminatory practices in a Europe that wants to keep the other out.

Habermas echoes this concern over ‘Fortress Europe’ urging the European states to agree upon liberal immigration policies. He writes, “They should not draw their wagons around themselves and their chauvinism of prosperity, hoping to ignore the pressures of those hoping to immigrate or seek asylum”.<sup>247</sup> While democracy allows for the preservation of a state’s political culture, he argues, this does not provide a

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<sup>241</sup> Nussbaum, 24.

<sup>242</sup> Ward, 87.

<sup>243</sup> Ward, 79.

<sup>244</sup> Ward, 79.

<sup>245</sup> Ward, 83.

<sup>246</sup> Ward, 90.

<sup>247</sup> Habermas, *Praxis International*, 17.

mandate for a “privileged *cultural* life form”.<sup>248</sup> A cosmopolitan model, would thus, allow for the introduction of a theoretical framework for the discussion of otherness and for the resolution of this exclusivity/inclusivity problem. Kristeva argues that otherness is intimately bound up with the question of nationality, whereas in reality otherness is the only universal.<sup>249</sup> She argues, “I am convinced, in the long run, only a thorough investigation of our remarkable relationship both with the *other* and *strangeness with ourselves* can lead to people to give up hunting for the scapegoat outside their group”.<sup>250</sup> Kant also argued for the accommodation of both the individual and the different. He argued for the need to broaden our sense of judgements by “putting ourselves in the place of any other man” thereby attributing the same rights to others as we attribute to ourselves.<sup>251</sup>

Philip Schlesinger, on the other hand believes that a European “cosmopolitan space that allows an escape from the prison-house of nationalism” is at present only a ‘temptation’.<sup>252</sup> Any serious move towards a cosmopolitan Europe, according to Schlesinger, must be premised by a serious move towards federalism because the development of a European public sphere rests on the development of common pan-European policies.<sup>253</sup> Though the EU institutions have challenged the norms of statehood, citizenship and identity, Schlesinger doubts that the EU can make the leap to a cosmopolitan polity because, to date, member states continue to be the key constructors of collective identities by controlling the public space, which shapes the daily lives of the *demos*.<sup>254</sup> Schlesinger argues that the rejection of both the Constitution and the Lisbon Treaty signifies the public’s lack of confidence in a collective European space, given that traditionally, public space is constructed through ‘mediated communication’ by a committed elite, based on a ‘national’ language. However, Habermas argues that a constitution would provide the necessary ‘common value orientation’, and legitimate a distinctive political space, thus allowing for the creation of a cosmopolitanism identity.<sup>255</sup> It becomes a ‘chicken and egg’

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<sup>248</sup> Habermas, *Praxis International*, 17.

<sup>249</sup> Kristeva, 21.

<sup>250</sup> Kristeva, 50-1.

<sup>251</sup> Kant, *The Critique of Judgement*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 151 quoted in Ward, 89.

<sup>252</sup> Schlesinger, 415.

<sup>253</sup> Schlesinger, 414.

<sup>254</sup> Schlesinger, 416.

<sup>255</sup> See J. Habermas, “Why Europe Needs A Constitution” *New Left Review*, September-October 2001, <http://www.newleftreview.org/A2343>

scenario. A constitution would create a European public space thus legitimising the EU polity but without a sense of identification provided by a European public space, the citizens of Europe have trouble trusting that the EU polity has their best interest at heart and their only form of protest is to vote no. Thus, a European identity remains weak.

### European Identity.

Symbolic elements such as the EU flag, EU passports and drivers' licences, the anthem and a common currency (Euro) progressively introduced by the EU institutions since the 1980s mirror traditional nation-building methodology. These symbols are designed to induce a commonality, a shared space, a sense of belonging, a common identity, in other words a collective public sphere. Theorists agree that a common European public sphere is necessary to provide a political identity, which is essential to the continued legitimacy of the EU. This public space needs to be politically based, and must not threaten the national sphere, nor attempt to replace Europe's cultural diversity with a single monoculture. Difference has always existed in Europe and will remain and where there is difference, there will be conflict, so it would be naïve to expect conflict to disappear from the European landscape. Unity in diversity is about discovering an identity tolerant of the other, about finding agreement on the other side of difference, about finding a mutual platform through dialogue. Therefore, as Cathleen Kantner, argues, a shared European identity should be "conceived as a 'normative corridor', one that is large enough for internal conflicts" and one that can allow for an "agreement upon common policies without 'speaking with one voice'".<sup>256</sup> Vocal diversity expressed through the medium of intercultural dialogue should be able to channel dissonance into harmony.

For Bo Strath, the "only viable model for a European identification is one that challenges the exclusivist kind of cultural identity".<sup>257</sup> He argues that the recent pre-occupation with a European identity has been wrongly focussed on trying to prove that Europe is a "distinctive cultural entity united by shared values, culture and

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<sup>256</sup> Cathleen Kantner, "What is a European Identity? The Emergence of a Shared Ethical Self-Understanding in the European Union", Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies. EUI Working Papers RSCAS No. 2006/28, 13. <http://www.iue.it/RSCAS/Publications/>

<sup>257</sup> Bo Strath, "Images of Europe in the World," Intercultural Dialogue. Conference Brussels 20-21 March, 2002, 8. [www.ecsanet.org/dialogue/contributions/STRATH.doc](http://www.ecsanet.org/dialogue/contributions/STRATH.doc)

identity”, stemming from its classical heritage.<sup>258</sup> Historically Europe has been fabricated as an entity on a quest for perfection, having a cultural identity based on core values and consensus ‘united’ against the Other. Strath argues that this concept of a European identity is an “abstraction and a fiction without essential proportions” and it actually prevents the creation of a common public space.<sup>259</sup> For Strath the building of a European identity/public sphere must be based on an acknowledgement of Europe’s ‘cultural contention’ and ‘pluralism’ because cultural cohesion in Europe is a myth.<sup>260</sup> Intercultural dialogue can only emerge when Europe’s obsession with ‘cohesion’ against ‘distinction’ dissolves. In order to transcend the mire of ‘distinction’ Strath suggests that Europe needs to adopt the role of active listener or mediator rather than that of role model.<sup>261</sup> Only by deconstructing Europe’s cultural ideology of exclusivity and acknowledging that Europe was and is constructed through contention and bargaining, and by acknowledging that Europe’s “symbolic and geopolitical boundaries...[have been] historically and discursively shaped” will Europe be free to rewrite its future as a global mediator and bridge-builder, thereby uniting rather than essentializing difference.<sup>262</sup> A cosmopolitan Europe is one that does not need an ‘other’ to construct identity against, for as Gerard Delanty argues, it “does not have a clear distinction between east and west or between Self and Other”.<sup>263</sup> To be European in a cosmopolitan sense, he argues, is to simply acknowledge that today “one lives in a world that does not belong to a specific people”.<sup>264</sup>

Meyer suggests that the EU needs a shared political identity that is not based on a shared cultural identity.<sup>265</sup> He posits that a political identity is a common meeting point, a sphere, which all citizens share irrespective of their culture and religious differences. While cultural diversity is an identifying factor of the EU it is not a sufficient foundation for a political identity. The requirements for a political identity, according to Meyer, are an *institutional script* (a defined set of values and objectives)

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<sup>258</sup> Strath, “Images,” 8.

<sup>259</sup> Strath, “A European Identity,” 387.

<sup>260</sup> Strath, “Images,” 8.

<sup>261</sup> Strath, “Images,” 6.

<sup>262</sup> Strath, “A European Identity,” 397.

<sup>263</sup> Gerard Delanty, *Rethinking Europe: Social Theory and the implications of Europeanisation*, (London: Routledge, 2005), 191.

<sup>264</sup> Delanty, p. 77

<sup>265</sup> Thomas Meyer, “European Identity”, 1, [www.ieem.org.mo/nesca/papers.html](http://www.ieem.org.mo/nesca/papers.html)



and a *political socio-culture* (a sense of identification with the script by the citizens).<sup>266</sup> Meyer argues that a political European identity is validated at the script level through the values and objectives enshrined in the Treaties and the Constitution. Quoting from Gerhards (2005) Meyer argues that recent empirical research in the EU showed that 70-90% of people favoured a “social democracy with a strong welfare state” as enshrined in the Treaties.<sup>267</sup> The ‘deficit’ crisis in the implementation of these policies at an EU level occurs because, as Meyer argues:

most national governments are extremely hesitant to agree to European solutions in the realm of social policies not due to ideological and economic reasons but more over because this is a national electoral arena.<sup>268</sup>

The problem for the European *demos*, as demonstrated by the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty by France and the Netherlands in 2005 and the rejection of the Lisbon Treaty by Ireland in 2008 is a lack of confidence in the EU’s ability to transform the rhetoric of the script into policy actions in the social domain. This contradiction reinforces the fragility of the European public sphere. While there continues to be a lack of enforcement of binding regulations with regard to social and employment policies at the EU level, the *demos* believe “social protection at the national level is endangered by the EU pressing for more liberalisation”.<sup>269</sup>

Furio Cerutti agrees that any European identity must be politically, rather than culturally based. He argues for a ‘thin political identity’ founded on reason rather than emotion, which does not compete with national identities.<sup>270</sup> For Cerutti, political identity is also legitimated by public recognition – an act of self-identification and an acceptance of social and political values, which engender a commonality through interpretation and debate.<sup>271</sup> Therefore, while the values in the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, the Maastricht Treaty or the Lisbon Treaty may be intellectually

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<sup>266</sup> Meyer, “European Identity,” 9.

<sup>267</sup> Meyer, “European Identity,” 14. For study results see Gerhards, Jurgen 2005: Kulturelle Unterschiede in der Europäischen Union. Ein Vergleich zwischen Mitgliedsländern, Beitrittskandidaten und der Türkei. Weisbaden.

<sup>268</sup> Meyer, “European Identity,” 15.

<sup>269</sup> Meyer, “European Identity,” 16.

<sup>270</sup> Furio Cerutti, “The Europeans: The European Union in search of political identity and legitimacy,” International Conference, Florence 25-26 May, 2007, 8.

<sup>271</sup> Furio Cerutti, “A Political Identity of the Europeans?” in *Thesis Eleven* 72, no.1 (2003): 28.  
<http://the.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/72/1/26>

agreed upon by the European public, for these values to be validated and inculcated into daily life, they must be brought to life through policy formation at the local, national and supranational levels. These institutions, Cerutti argues, “are the embodiment of the normative element that is essential to political identity”.<sup>272</sup> At present, those issues that remain closest to the hearts of European citizens (medical care, law and order, education, welfare benefits and taxation) are jealously guarded by national states, thus monopolising loyalties. The EU as a regulator of trade, monetary policies, environmental issues and foreign aid does not strike a passionate note. Europeans tend, therefore, to be more passionate about their nation than they do about the EU. For the majority it all comes back to ‘self-preservation’. Cerutti argues, therefore, that the EU needs a different ‘glue’ from the member states if it is to establish a common European identity. Rifkin would argue for a ‘new social glue’ called empathy while cosmopolitans like Kristeva argue for *esprit general*. Ward argues for a ‘glue’ of universal human rights and Schnapper remarks that there is evidence of a ‘glue’ called reason. In his book, David Green argues that there is evidence of an embryonic European identity based on “the cerebral rather than emotive, instrumental rather than devoted”.<sup>273</sup> It is as yet a weak identity but one that is unlikely to inspire the passions and disasters associated with nationalism.

Traditionally, identity is constructed by the political elite but there is evidence that this weak embryonic European identity is driven by a different elite. Those young educated Europeans that look outward rather than inward. In 1998, a journalist described this new generation in an article in the *New York Times* as:

Mobile, fluent in several languages and aggressively non-nationalistic, they are already living a borderless, cosmopolitan existence that the single European currency is supposed to advance. They do not share their parents’ memories of World War II or their parents’ sense of national identity.<sup>274</sup>

These are Castells’ elite, those, who have the ability to master the disjunction between the global and the local, the national and the transnational. What about the rest? Those who have not mastered liquid modernity and, as Strath warned earlier,

<sup>272</sup> Cerutti, “A Political Identity,” 29.

<sup>273</sup> David Michael Green, *The Europeans: Political Identity in an Emerging Polity* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2007), 163.

<sup>274</sup> Alessandra Stanley, 1998. “For Ambitious Entrepreneurs, All Europe Is Just One Nation,” *New York Times*, December 24: A1, A10, cited in Green, *The Europeans*, 72.

find themselves in danger of falling in between two cultures, or falling into the abysses of modernity. What about the majority who are reliant on the nation-state to provide the basics of life, and the immigrants who are reliant on the nation-state to protect their right to life? How can they benefit from a European identity? In order to create a common European identity the EU institutions must address the basic needs of the common people. Identity is reciprocal, inclusion fosters loyalty, exclusion fosters rejection. Only as the *demos* see genuine leadership by the EU institutions in the areas that concern them most, will they lend legitimacy to a European political identity – when the polity values the people, the people value the polity. Thus, it seems unity keeps coming back to policy.

Pettigrew argues that policy makers need to be proactive in integrating the areas of employment, education and housing to facilitate opportunities for natural interaction, thus dispelling misperceptions.<sup>275</sup> Segregation, he writes, is the enemy of integration because “intergroup separation magnifies negative stereotypes”.<sup>276</sup> If groups work and live separately and their children are schooled separately, there is little occasion for cross communication and intergroup marriage. There is less opportunity for what Clinton Bennett calls ‘virtual insidership’ - the ability to think, feel and see the other point of view.<sup>277</sup> A study by the British Sociological Association in 2006, found that parents who have specifically chosen to send their children to multicultural schools reinforces the idea of ‘virtual insidership’. As Avril Smart, a journalist and parent remarked:

I think there is an understanding of others you can only have if you are sort of with them all the time. It is something to learn of other cultures, but to actually learn with other cultures, of other cultures, it is a completely different thing.<sup>278</sup>

Maalouf contends it is the people of “mixed ethnicities and/or mixed allegiances” that can act as a “mortar joining together and strengthening the societies in which they

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<sup>275</sup> Thomas F. Pettigrew, “Social Identity Matters: Predicting Prejudice and Violence in West Europe,” in *Identity Matters: Ethnic and Sectarian Conflict*, ed. James I. Peacock, Patricia M. Thorton and Patrick B. Inman (New York: Berghann Books, 2007), 111.

<sup>276</sup> Pettigrew, 111.

<sup>277</sup> Bennett, Clinton, *Muslims and Modernity: An Introduction to the issues and debates* (London: Continuum, 2005), 1.

<sup>278</sup> Diane Reay and others, “A Darker shade of pale? Whiteness, the Middle Classes and Multi-Ethnic Inner City Schooling,” *Sociology* 41, no.6 (2007), 1045.

live”.<sup>279</sup> These people, he argues, live in the ‘frontier zone’ of identity and these ‘frontier dwellers’ have a role to play as mediators, and bridge builders.<sup>280</sup> Luca Visconti, a professor at Bocconi University in Milan concurs, saying, “Second generation [Muslim] immigrants are a huge resource because they live in the middle” and are able to bridge both cultures.<sup>281</sup> Echoing Rifkin’s call for ‘empathy’, and Bennett’s ‘virtual insidership’, Maalouf argues for reciprocity – the more one immerses oneself in the culture of the other, the more one can identify with them. The more one can identify with others the more tolerant one is of the others’ right to belong, and since identity is validated by belonging, life is meaningful only if it is shared.<sup>282</sup>

The challenge for the EU in the 21<sup>st</sup> century then, is to create a collective European identity, which validates its multi-ethnic population. In 1988, the EU conducted a ‘prejudice’ survey in France, Great Britain, the Netherlands and West Germany. The Eurobarometer 30 survey (Euro 88) asked a number of prejudice related questions whilst also measuring the respondent’s identification to either a national, or European, identity.<sup>283</sup> The survey designed to quantify both blatant and subtle prejudice, measured a threat-and-rejection factor and an intimacy factor. While a third of the interviewees were both proud of their nation state and also considered themselves to be Europeans, the survey discovered that “strong national identity is linked to greater prejudice on both measures, while European identity is linked to reduced prejudice on both measures”.<sup>284</sup>

Fourteen years later, in 2002, a probability phone survey conducted in Germany (GMF02) replicated the same prejudicial leanings.<sup>285</sup> It found that Germans, who identified more highly with Europe rather than Germany, were the least prejudiced

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<sup>279</sup> Maalouf, 4 and 36 respectively.

<sup>280</sup> Maalouf, 4.

<sup>281</sup> Elizabette Povoledo, “Muslims seek to build future in Italy,” *International Herald Tribune: Europe*. Published 04/03/09. Accessed via <http://www.iht.com/articles/2009/03/04/europe/muslim.php>

<sup>282</sup> Pettigrew, 34.

<sup>283</sup> For an in-depth analysis of this research, see T. F Pettigrew, and R. W. Meertens, 1995. “Subtle and Blatant Prejudice in Western Europe,” in *European Journal of Social Psychology* 57: 57-75, and Reif, K. and A. Melich, 1991. *Euro-Barometer 30: Immigrants and Out-Groups in Western Europe, October-November 1988*. ICPSR 9321. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research

<sup>284</sup> Pettigrew, 36.

<sup>285</sup> For an in-depth analysis of this survey, see W. Heitmeyer, ed. 2002. *Deutsche Zustände* [The German Situation]. Part 1. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag

and the least pro-violence. Thus, it appears that a more expansive European identity has a moderating affect on prejudicial and pro-violent nationalistic tendencies.<sup>286</sup> The results in both surveys were also affected by other social indicators such as education, age and political affiliation. Those who identified strongly with their nation-state thus projecting stronger prejudices, tended to be older, politically conservative and less well educated.<sup>287</sup> The dichotomy for Europe being, that Europe's aging population does not want the very people (immigrants) that Europe's future depends on. The study found that while the "existence of multiple overlapping...identities inhibits collective violence and promotes social cohesion...intense conflicts of interest, pressure individuals with diverse, fluid identities to valorize their loyalty to one group...prompting social hostility and mutual hostility".<sup>288</sup>

If the uncertainty generated by globalisation entrenches the building of resistance identities (national, ethnic or fundamental), how can the EU construct an expansive, inclusive, tolerant identity? If hybridity and diversity intensify a thirst for 'purified identities, how does the EU construct a 'heterogeneous identity'? While 'Europeans' identify with the universal values and norms promoted by the EU on an intellectual plane, hearts and passions remain with their nation-states for historical reasons of loyalty, and in this topsy-turvy world, for security and self-preservation. Beneath the democratic deficit lies a security deficit. Can the citizens of Europe trust the EU institutions to deliver? Robert Picht writes:

Where traditional institutions, habits and beliefs fail and where no new authority can be easily established, dialogue – the patient search for common ground, shared interests and mutually acceptable arguments – constitute the only hope for new rationality.<sup>289</sup>

The challenge for the EU institutions is therefore to engage in a dialogue that will result in the expansion of the 'imagined' European identity (without losing individual national or cultural flavours) and thus, provide a carapace for its chorus of multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-political voices. The perception at present is that the EU

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<sup>286</sup> Pettigrew, 41.

<sup>287</sup> Pettigrew, 37.

<sup>288</sup> Pettigrew, 3-4.

<sup>289</sup> Robert Picht, "Disturbed Identities: Social and Cultural Mutations in Contemporary Europe," in *European Identity and the Search for Legitimacy*, ed. Soledad Garcia (London: Pinter Publishers, 1993), 93.

is competing for loyalty against the member states. If European identity is presented as an either or choice, as a competition for loyalty for the supranational over and against the national, then any European political identity will indeed be 'thin'. A cosmopolitan identity does not threaten national allegiances but how does one give substance to the notion? How does one legislate *esprit general*? Cosmopolitan or not, in order to prevent Europe from becoming an 'impossible project' any European identity must find a way to accommodate a dialogue with its traditional other –Islam.

## **CHAPTER FOUR** **MUSLIM IDENTITY.**

“Before being Muslim, they are citizens, with their political opinions,  
and every element of their personality”.<sup>290</sup>

### *Introduction.*

Islam has been present in Western Europe for centuries but in recent decades a growing apprehension of cultural and religious ‘difference’ has brought forth an “unfounded hostility toward Islam, and therefore fear or dislike of all or most Muslims” throughout the EU.<sup>291</sup> Coined ‘Islamophobia’ by the Runnymede Trust in its 1977 report, this ‘fear or dislike’ has grown from a perceived invasion by the voluntary mass-migration of Muslims into EU states in the last thirty to forty years. Understandably, fear has escalated due to terrorist attacks throughout Europe during the previous fifteen years, unrest in the Middle East and by the United States led ‘war on terror’. Anti-Muslim prejudice in Europe has resulted in the perception that every Muslim is a potential terrorist, thus stretching the fabric of European unity and endangering Europe’s socio-cultural vision. The rising visibility of Muslims throughout the EU is forcing a re-conceptualisation of European identity by challenging age-old religious, political and secular paradigms. The emergence of Mosques, challenge Europe’s architectural landscapes, *burqa* clad women challenge western feminist stereotypes, prayer groups challenge western secularism, and Muslim burial requirements and the slaughter of *halal* meat challenge national and municipal policies. Thus, by demanding recognition, Islam is questioning core European norms and values.

European Islam is now a powerful transnational force in Europe and as such, it challenges the fundamental concept of European identity. The search for a European public identity looks to remain problematic unless it can validate Europe’s Muslims and non-Muslims alike by guaranteeing social, religious and political representation for all. Is Euro-Islam about a clash of civilisations or is it about historical church-state

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<sup>290</sup> Godard, Bernard, “Official Recognition of Islam,” in *European Islam*, Samir Amghar et al, 202.

<sup>291</sup> Runnymede Trust, Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia, *Islamophobia: a challenge for us all*, (London: Runnymede Trust, 1997).

power struggles, national politics and equal rights? Is Islam, in fact, a threat to European identity or is there evidence of a new embryonic Muslim identity in Europe that is compatible with a pluralistic society?

Mid 1940s, there were less than a million Muslims in Europe, living mostly in France and Great Britain. This number has risen to an estimated 15 million plus Muslims, who are now widely spread throughout the EU member states.<sup>292</sup> Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, various EU states adopted differing integration paradigms for dealing with the influx of Muslims into their societies. Britain's multiculturalism treated Muslims as a separate, collective minority group, entitled to specific benefits because of their 'difference'. Conversely, France enacted a policy of assimilation, by refusing to acknowledge minority rights and ignoring cultural, religious and ethnic differences. Other member states adopted a variation on these approaches. Both models led to the creation of marginalised societies and ghettoisation, in turn leading to discontent and riots. The rapid rise in visibility of Islam within Europe due to ongoing conflicts, coupled with the failure of multiculturalism and assimilation now presents a challenge for EU leadership and for policy makers alike, to construct a mutually inclusive European identity encompassing not just Judeo-Christian based secularity but also Islam.

Opinion polls, released by The Pew Foundation 2006,<sup>293</sup> and The Gallup Organisation 2007,<sup>294</sup> reported that Muslims do not disagree with fundamental European values *per se*. However, many Muslims believe they are not treated equally concerning religious tolerance, equality before the law, or the right to personal dignity. While there is a perception in Europe that Muslims are demanding special treatment, their search for recognition is not irrational. In November 1996, Prince Hassan Ibn Talal of Jordan remarked:

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<sup>292</sup> Due to the lack of official statistics, estimates vary greatly. See AlSayyad, Nezar & Castells, Manuel, eds. *Muslim Europe or Euro-Islam: Politics, Culture, And Citizenship In The Age of Globalisation* (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2002), 83-84.

<sup>293</sup> Pew Global Attitudes Project, *Europe's Muslims More Moderate: The Great Divide – How Westerners and Muslims View Each Other*, Released June 22, 2006. Accessed via <http://pewglobal.org/reports/pfd/253.pdf>

<sup>294</sup> Gallup World Poll, *Beyond Multiculturalism vs. Assimilation*, Special Report by Dalia Mogahed. Released April 2007. Accessed via <http://media.gallup.com/muslimwestfacts/PDF/londonbrieffull041307.pdf>



...the principles of Islam require a Muslim minority to obey a state in which it is resident,... The Muslims of Europe are therefore not asking for special privileges,... They are merely asking for their religion to be recognized within the European context.<sup>295</sup>

This request continues to be pivotal to the integration of Muslims in the EU. Despite the traditional notion of Islam as immutable, history testifies that Islam is indeed adaptable, fluid, pragmatic and accommodating of change. Given the opportunity, scholars believe Islam is equal to the task of adapting to modernity, globalisation and the challenges presented by life in non-Muslim countries.<sup>296</sup> As Cem Ozdemir comments in the Pew Poll, “Being a Muslim and a Westerner are not necessarily mutually exclusive”.<sup>297</sup> Arguably, Muslim identity, whilst constrained by specific parameters laid down in the *Qur'an*, is capable of accommodating western democratic values and has the potential therefore of being compatible with a European identity - if equally recognised.

This chapter seeks to analyse the role of Islam in Europe in relation to Muslim identity. It will return to the primordialist/constructivist debate, again arguing for a constructivist approach. Secondly, it will analyse the ‘space’ allotted to Muslim immigrants by receiving states (using Britain, France and Germany as examples), and how their welcome or the lack thereof, affected identity construction. This involves an analysis of the problems arising from the rapid growth of Islam in the EU post WW 2 due to the influx of recruited migrants and subsequent family re-unification policies, to explain how integration policies failed to address important socio-cultural differences. This chapter will also discuss how the effects of globalisation, the terrorist threat in Europe and the perception of an ‘Islam in crisis’ affects the construction of Muslim identity in Europe. Is a crisis in Islam the cause of ongoing conflicts involving Europe’s Muslims, or is it the underlying tension driven by socio-economics and increasing marginalisation? Finally, this chapter will argue for the right and necessity of Muslim voices to be heard in the European context, advocating that once the EU takes responsibility for its ‘European Muslims’ providing for their

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<sup>295</sup> Speech delivered by the then Crown Prince of Jordan, cited in Alsayyad, Nezar “Muslim Migrants in Europe: Between Euro-Islam and Ghettoization” in Nezar Alsayyad & Manuel Castells eds. *Muslim Europe or Euro-Islam*, p. 45.

<sup>296</sup> Tibi, *Accommodation*, 74.

<sup>297</sup> Ozdemir, Cem, Member of European Parliament for Germany’s Green Party, Pew Report, 29.

physical and spiritual health, education, employment and housing on an equitable playing field with all European citizens, a European Islam will naturally evolve. A European Islam that is not vulnerable to politicalisation by foreign funding or foreign *imams*, but one supported through religious, cultural and political pluralism, thereby acknowledging that Islam is now a European religion and Muslims are Europeans too.

### Primordialism versus Constructivism

As noted in the previous chapter primordialists argue that identity is a ‘fixed inner core’, an ‘essence’ untouched by external factors that emerges at birth and remains primarily the same throughout a person’s life.<sup>298</sup> Conversely, constructivists argue that identities are relational and always incomplete, being shaped and reshaped in response to circumstance and interaction with others – whether personal or institutional – constructing meaning through experience.<sup>299</sup> Constructivists posit that identity is a process in which inherited traits, are moulded and shaped in the crucible of experience. Identity is malleable, fluid, composite and unique for even identical twins can develop radically different social, religious and political views relative to their individual experiences. Validation that Muslim identity is as much a construct as western identity can be found in the fact that European Muslims are not a homogeneous bloc - a fact that should be encouraging but which, Western Europe finds difficult to accept because the political institutions prefer to deal with one representative body. British Pakistani Muslims differ from German Turkish Muslims who in turn differ from French Algerian Muslims. As Bassam Tibi notes:

My own identity is made up of diverse cultural sources. Religio-culturally I am a Euro-Muslim, ethnically I am a Damascene Arab, and politically I am a German citizen. I believe that the combination of these components can grow together to form a complex identity.<sup>300</sup>

Thus, the debate concerning Muslim identity is not primarily one of a single ‘essence’, but one that must acknowledge the multi-layered dimension of ethnicity and culture constructed through the lens of Islam. Although Europe is comprised of

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<sup>298</sup> Hall, *Modernity and its Futures*, 275.

<sup>299</sup> Chimisso, 40.

<sup>300</sup> Tibi, *Between Culture and Politics*, 208.

many ethnicities and cultures, it is the essentialist nature of Islam (Christianity's archetypal 'other'), that strikes fear into the hearts of Europeans. Any debate concerning Muslim identity is in fact a debate about the primordial nature of Islam, the fear for Europeans being, can Islam accommodate a pluralistic western society? This apprehension stems from a belief that Islam, as a legalised set of precepts fixed in stone is unable to adjust or accept liberalism. Certainly, for the practising Muslim the *Qur'an* is the primary source of holy law, which is an indispensable part of a Muslim's faith. This law is "divine not human, revealed not enacted, and cannot therefore be repealed or abrogated, supplemented or amended"<sup>301</sup>. It is this understanding of Islam as immutable, and as a religion that promotes absolute adherence to a rigid dogma, that leads to the perception that Islam is not compatible with western democracy

Undeniably, Islam is founded on the sacred undisputed text of the *Qur'an* - an 'eternal commandment' relevant for all time. However, while there is little room for movement where the *Qur'an* is explicit, where the command is allusive, there is an opportunity for creative interpretation.<sup>302</sup> Supporting the *Qur'an* are the traditions of the Prophet known as *hadith*. While also binding in principle, there are numerous *hadiths*, which over time Muslim scholars assembled into an authenticated body of traditions. These traditions allowed Muslim scholars licence to adapt the law to meet changing circumstances and even the *Qur'an* itself allows for interpretation according to necessity (*darura*).<sup>303</sup> Thus, over centuries doctrine evolved as different schools of jurisprudence arose and as circumstances dictated a need to accommodate different political and social climates, proving that even the absolute must bend before the winds of change. Laws covered the treatment of non-Muslims living in Muslim states, and codes for Muslims as warriors, seafarers, prisoners, and as temporary visitors in non-Muslim lands, known as the land of conflict (*dar-al-harb*). There was however, no precedent in Islamic law for the voluntary and permanent migration of Muslims to predominantly Christian countries.<sup>304</sup>

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<sup>301</sup> Bernard Lewis, "Legal and Historical Reflections on the Position of Muslim Populations Under Non-Muslim Rule," in *Muslims in Europe*, eds) Bernard Lewis and Dominique Schnapper (London: Pinter Publishers, 1994), 1.

<sup>302</sup> Lewis, 2.

<sup>303</sup> Lewis, 3.

<sup>304</sup> Lewis, 16.

Muslim immigrants to Europe therefore found themselves between two worlds, “seeing themselves as eternal foreigners living parallel or marginalised lives outside main-stream society”.<sup>305</sup> As Tariq Ramadan writes, this necessitated a return to the principles of Islam “in order to delineate and distinguish what, in their religion, is unchangeable (*thabit*) from what is subject to change (*mutaghayyir*).<sup>306</sup> Unlike Christianity, Islam is not a theology. It is an essential part of a Muslims identity. Ramadan explains:

Above and beyond the diversity of their national cultures, the essence of their faith, their identity, their belonging in the world, is the same; they define themselves on the basis of points of reference that...root them in the universe of Islam.<sup>307</sup>

Despite these ‘points of reference’, identities are still variously constructed according to the separate schools of thought that evolved under the Sunni or Shia traditions during the Middle Ages.<sup>308</sup> These schools tended to have diverse ethnic and geographical boundaries, explaining why Muslims in Europe do not belong to one homogenous bloc, for example, Turks in Germany differ from Pakistanis in Britain. Even within countries, Muslims can differ in their practice of Islam according to their ethnicity and place of birth. Just as there is room for different interpretations amongst the various schools of thought, there is also room for discussion regarding the Islamic principles. Although the teachings of Islam provide precise laws regarding religious ritual, from which no deviation shall be permitted, as far as political and social matters are concerned there is room for creative elucidation. As Ramadan explains, Muslims need to decide individually “using their reason, their freedom and, and more broadly, their imagination”, what their commitment will be concerning the social and political levels.<sup>309</sup> Thus, Ramadan argues that there is room for interpretation within Islam for Muslims to accommodate western democracy. However, how much ‘room’ is there in western democratic states to accommodate Islam? How accommodating are western pluralistic societies in Europe, to their Muslim populations? Like all

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<sup>305</sup> Siobhan McPhee, *Muslim Identity: The European Context*, Sussex Migration Working Paper No. 34, (Sussex: Sussex Centre for Migration Research, September 2005), 10.

<sup>306</sup> Tariq Ramadan, *Western Muslims and The Future of Islam* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004), 9.

<sup>307</sup> Ramadan, *Western Muslims*, 9.

<sup>308</sup> Lewis, 5.

<sup>309</sup> Ramadan, *Western Muslims*, 145.

identities, Muslim identity is constructed by the interaction of both internal and external forces. It involves the internalisation of individual cultural experiences (family, ethnicity, country of origin, gender, occupation and citizenship) filtered through the lens of Islam and fused with the external imposition of institutionalised societal norms. The primary influential factor for Muslim immigrants with regard to the formation of a 'European identity', therefore, is the way in which Europe receives them.

### *Identity - From Guest Worker to Citizen?*

Today, Europe has a Muslim population of approximately fifteen million stemming largely from the immigration policies of the early twentieth century.<sup>310</sup> Facing severe labour shortages post WW 1 and WW 2 Europe actively encouraged the recruitment of male migrant workers to swell the depleted workforce. To make up the labour shortfall the former colonial powers of France and Great Britain, recruited immigrants from their colonies in North Africa, and India and Pakistan respectively while Germany recruited 'guest-workers' primarily from Turkey. Initially, these European states considered themselves merely 'host' nations and the migrants themselves, who supported families back home also considered their status as temporary. The oil-induced recession in 1974, resulting in high unemployment, caused a quandary as member states sought to restrict immigration. However, reunification policies produced a second wave of immigrants as families flocked to join their men-folk thus, dramatically changing the sociological dynamics throughout the EU.

European states struggled to accommodate the influx of Muslim families, discovering that hosting guest workers in single men's quarters was completely different to providing accommodation and social services (health, education) for their wives and children. Permanent settlement challenged the political calculus as questions of cultural and religious rights overlaid political and economic concerns for Muslims, testing governments' ability to accommodate religious diversity. Crucial to their perception of their host nation was their treatment by officialdom – were they awarded citizenship, was their religion legally recognised and were they granted the

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<sup>310</sup> For an in depth history of Muslim immigration to EU Member States see Jorgen Nielsen's *Muslims in Western Europe* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995)

freedom to practice Islam without constraints?<sup>311</sup> Hussain argues that the “self-image” of a nation reflects its treatment of minorities.<sup>312</sup> Colonial Britain, with its long history of migration prided itself in its multicultural society and its pragmatic ability to accommodate different ethnicities whereas for Germany national identity sprang from their bloodline, (*jus sanguinis*) forming a defence against external threats. Conversely, French identity (epitomized by the cry ‘liberty, equality and fraternity’) was forged in the internal conflict in a tripartite battle between the people, and the Monarchy, the ruling elite, and the Catholic Church. Since the Revolution, French political and social life has developed on the philosophy of equality for all and freedom from religious domination. Consequently, France does not recognise any form of class structure including minorities. Fetzer and Soper maintain that the different historical legacies of ‘institutional church –state patterns’ within the EU are also highly significant in explaining the methodology employed in the development of public policy concerning the religious rights of their Muslim populations.<sup>313</sup> Klausen concurs, maintaining, “There is a popular fallacy that public life in Europe is secular. On the contrary states have given privileges to the Christian churches for centuries”.<sup>314</sup>

In Britain, the strong church-state relationship eventually worked to the benefit of the Muslim population because church-state structures provided a context through which religious accommodation for Muslims could be negotiated. Thus, after a long struggle Muslims benefited from the existing practices of religious instruction in state schools, state aid to religious schools and aid for the building of mosques.<sup>315</sup> Britain’s multicultural policies encouraged all cultural groups to create their own institutional structures in order to protect their customs and religious practices and the 1948 British Nationality Act allowed Commonwealth immigrants access to British citizenship with all the civil and legal rights and privileges that entailed prior to the

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<sup>311</sup> Agata S. Nalborczyk, “The perception among Muslim minorities of host European countries: influence of legal status and citizenship,” in *Global Change, Peace and Security* 20, no.1 (2008), 60.

<sup>312</sup> Dilwar Hussain, “Representation and Relationship with the State,” in *Modernising Islam: Religion in the Public Sphere in Europe and the Middle East*, eds) Esposito, John, L, & Burquaat, (London: C. Hurst & Co., 2002), 222.

<sup>313</sup> For a comprehensive study of church-state policies regarding Muslim immigrants to Europe see Joel S. Fetzer and Christopher J. Soper, *Muslims and the State in Britain, France, Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)

<sup>314</sup> Klausen, 8.

<sup>315</sup> Fetzer & Soper, 60.

1970s.<sup>316</sup> However, the Anglican faith - with the Queen as Head of the Church - is the supreme symbol of British national identification, thus favouring the Church of England over all other faiths. Fetzer and Soper argue that the state has not granted the same benefits to Muslims that the Church of England enjoys and, despite granting citizenship, the state did not accord Muslims the right of protection from religious discrimination, thus denying them their “distinctive religious identity”.<sup>317</sup> Although Britain established the 1976 Race Relations Act, to prohibit discrimination on “racial or ethnic grounds” it did not provide protection from discrimination on “religious” grounds meaning that while ethnic minorities, like Sikhs and Jews, benefit from legal protection, Muslims as a religious group did not.<sup>318</sup>

Germany introduced the concept of the *Gastarbeiter* (guest worker) as a short-term solution to labour shortages, with the majority of migrants coming from Turkey. As these migrants and their families settled permanently, Germany also found itself ill equipped to provide for their social and religious needs. While the German Constitution does protect the right of an individual to religious freedom, Germany refused to accord Islam the same ‘public corporation status’ that legitimises the Catholic and Protestant Churches.<sup>319</sup> Withholding public corporation status symbolises a legal rejection of Islam within the German religious topography thus again marginalising Muslim identity. Citizenship in Germany stems from ethnic descent rather than birthright (*jus solis*) meaning that second and third generation people of German ancestry who have never lived in Germany can become German citizens while the children of Muslim immigrants, born on German soil, could not. Although they lived, worked and paid taxes in Germany, the lack of citizenship robbed them of a political voice. Denied the right to vote, they found it difficult to identify with the country of their birth.<sup>320</sup> By contrast, in German speaking Austria, where Muslims have citizenship and the state officially recognises Islam, Muslims are proud to call Austria home. The same is true in Poland where the state officially

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<sup>316</sup> Fetzer & Soper, 30.

<sup>317</sup> Fetzer & Soper, 31.

<sup>318</sup> Subsequently, in response to an EU Directive (Council Directive 2000/78 of 27 November 2000), Britain ruled discrimination, in recruitment or employment on the grounds of religion, unlawful in December 2003.

<sup>319</sup> Fetzer & Soper, 108.

<sup>320</sup> Changes to the naturalization law 1 January 2000, means that all children born in Germany will automatically receive citizenship if one of their parents has lived in Germany for eight years.

recognised Islam in 1936. Muslims of Tartar descent regard themselves as “loyal citizens of Poland and a Muslim at the same time”.<sup>321</sup>

While most Muslims in France are citizens, paradoxically, it is the legacy of a backlash against the Catholic Church in the eighteenth century that complicated the integration story.<sup>322</sup> Mandated in 1905 the principle of *laïcité* – the strict separation of church and state – refused to recognise either religions, or minorities, resulting in a policy of assimilation where ‘difference’ is not acknowledged, nor accommodated.<sup>323</sup> Modood argues that French secularism became the:

justification for imposing an essentialist definition of religion as an intrinsically private matter upon powerless minorities who have a different conception of religious duties.<sup>324</sup>

While secularism facilitated the separation of church and state in order to foster equality and tolerance, official secularism (evidenced by *laïcité*) marginalises minority religions leading to ethno-religious separatism and communalism.<sup>325</sup> Ziauddin Sardar agrees, positing that Europe’s Muslims are rendered powerless because:

freedom of expression belongs to those with secular power, or access and opportunity within the secular structures of power.... As the pre-eminent truth and doctrine of the West, it renders insignificant and makes invisible all that is outside its purview, all the possibilities and potential outside its framework of power.<sup>326</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> Nalborczyk, 62.

<sup>322</sup> The Pasqua Laws in 1993 changed French citizenship from one based on *jus soli* to a more restrictive system. Immigration laws modified again in 1998, remain more restrictive than other member states.

<sup>323</sup> France prided itself on its egalitarianism, a principle dating back to the French Revolution in 1789 when the French people repudiated the ‘sovereign right of kings’ ushering in the sovereign right of the people and proclaiming equality, liberty and fraternity. The 1789 Revolutionary *Declaration Des droits de l’homme et du citoyen* states in Article 10, “No one may be troubled on account of his or her opinions, even religious ones, provided that their manifestation does not disturb the public order established by law”. This sovereign right, codified in Article 1 of the Law of Separation in 1905 by the principle of *laïcité*, sought to restrict the influence of the Roman Catholic Church to matters ecclesiastical, whilst ensuring religious impotence in political matters.

<sup>324</sup> Modood, Tariq, “Establishment, Multiculturalism and British Citizenship,” *The Political Quarterly* 65, no.1 (1994), 69.

<sup>325</sup> Modood, “Establishment,” 70.

<sup>326</sup> Ziauddin Sardar, *Desperately Seeking Paradise: Journeys of a Sceptical Muslim* (London: Grant Books, 2005), 292.



Thus, Muslim immigrants (often unemployed) found themselves marginalized in what was to become the ghettos of the future, setting the pattern for the next two decades. As Harlem Desir, (President of SOS Racisme) said in 1990, “Ghettos and educational failure threaten the French melting-pot and the republican idea of a France which can integrate everyone in its territory”.<sup>327</sup> Modood argues this communalism turns aggressive when alienated from the centre.<sup>328</sup> Hence, the many conflicts with youths in the *banlieues* in the 1990s.

Throughout Europe, Muslims found themselves marginalised by secular societies, ill prepared to cope with the public face of Islam. Initially, Islam was the hidden religion with prayers being conducted in run down buildings in back alleys. For decades, Muslims have struggled for the accommodation of their religious practices in both state institutions – hospital, prisons and schools – and in the workplace. They have fought for the right to build mosques, to have *halal* slaughterhouses, and to have Muslim cemeteries. Unprepared for the social ramifications of accommodating permanent families, inadequate social and national policies, and the lack of recognition of their religious identity disadvantaged these ‘unwanted immigrants’ in the mid 1970s and, 30-40 years later, the lack of recognition continues to hamper integration. The irony being that Muslims only want to work and raise their families with the same rights to education, opportunity and religious freedom accorded to their neighbours:

Muslims would like to be able to visit their mosque and say their prayers peacefully without interruption, without being beaten up, without being picked up for interrogation.<sup>329</sup>

Personal experience and reflected political mirror images validate identity. Failure by state authorities to grant citizenship, to recognise Islam as an official religion, and to guarantee the same living conditions, stigmatised Europe’s Muslims. Like immigrants worldwide, Muslims in the EU found themselves confined to the edges of mainstream society, marginalised by language, education and economics. A study of third

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<sup>327</sup> Cathie Lloyd, “Racist Violence and Anti-racist Reactions: A View of France,” in *Racist Violence in Europe*, eds. Tore Bjorgo and Rob Witte (London: St Martins Press, 1993), 216.

<sup>328</sup> Modood, “Establishment,” 71.

<sup>329</sup> Akbar, S. Ahmed, *Living Islam, from Samarkand to Stornoway* (London: BBC Books Ltd, 1993), 5, cited in McPhee, Siohban, *Muslim Identity: the European Context*, (Sussex: University of Sussex, 2005), 6.

generation youths in Germany in 1997 discovered that despite being born in Germany, speaking fluent German and understanding German culture they felt a “lack of orientation” because mainstream society refused to recognise them.<sup>330</sup> Living in municipally endorsed ghettos or in self-initiated isolation, Muslims are under pressure to adapt and integrate according to parameters set by the majority – a majority, often constrained by fear.

### Identity – The Lens of Islamophobia.

Ethnic conflicts seldom have shallow roots – they are, instead, nurtured over generations by an almost pathological fear of ‘difference’ especially when the difference threatens the status quo. Ancient conflicts between Islam and Christianity led to a perception of Islam as a violent and inherently antagonistic faith. Islam was the antithesis of Christianity, the epitome of a “moral and cultural otherness” inhabiting a “non-Christian geographical space”.<sup>331</sup> Scholars like Husband argue that, “historically derived stereotypes of Islam and ‘the Orient’ are continuously latent within British [and European] popular culture and learning”, leading to a “negative *bricolage* of imagery” resulting in the perception of ethnic minority communities as an “enemy within”.<sup>332</sup> A columnist echoed these words in the British media after the 2001 September 11 attack on New York’s Twin Towers:

We have a fifth column in our midst...Thousands of alienated young Muslims, most of them born and bred here but who regard themselves as an army within, are waiting for the opportunity to help to destroy the society that sustains them.<sup>333</sup>

All too often the media reinforces the concept of Islam as alien, radical and dangerous. In 2004, a report for the Commission on British Muslims comments on the proclivity of the media to “elevate fringe figures to a place of mainstream importance”.<sup>334</sup> One such example was the focus on the radical Muslim cleric Abu Hamza after September 11 whose extreme views were repeatedly featured in the

<sup>330</sup> Working groups of Bielefeld Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence (1997) cited in Meyer, *Identity Mania*, 47-8.

<sup>331</sup> Charles Husband, “The Political Context of Muslim Communities’ Participation in British Society,” in *Muslims in Europe*, eds. Bernard Lewis and Bernard Schnapper (London: Pinter Publishers, 1994), 81.

<sup>332</sup> Husband, 80, 81 and 83 respectively.

<sup>333</sup> Melanie Phillips, “The Fifth Column,” Sunday Star Times, 4 November, 2001.???

<sup>334</sup> CBMI Report, “Islamophobia: issues, challenges and action,” (Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books, 2004), 66.

Daily Mail. Frustrated by this emphasis the Muslim Council of Britain complained saying:

There are over 800 mosques in the UK and only one of them is run by a known radical. Yet this one mosque (Finsbury Park, London) seems to get more coverage than all the rest put together! The situation is akin to taking a member of the racist BNP and saying his views are representative of ordinary Britons.<sup>335</sup>

This focus on an ‘enemy within’ stems from a long legacy of Christian/Islamic conflicts beginning in the fifteenth century - a legacy, which has coloured Europe’s long history of racism?<sup>336</sup> Italian, Russian, Spanish, Polish, and Jewish immigrants all suffered discrimination in Europe in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>337</sup> Although, overtime these immigrants along with their children and grandchildren gradually integrated into European society, integration of the increasing Muslim population continues to be problematic. Whereas European immigrants melded in with the general populace, Muslims are conspicuously different and ancient fears linger still. Bauman maintains that, “Identities are for wearing and sharing, not for storing and keeping” but much of the difficulty surrounding the acceptance of Muslim communities in the EU has to do with their visibility.<sup>338</sup> It is precisely this visible ‘difference’ that incites Islamophobia.

The visibility debate erupted in France in 1989, where three Muslim schoolgirls wearing the headscarf (*hijab*) were sent home, resulting in national chaos. The headscarf symbolized a multifaceted challenge – not only to French nationality, but also to citizenship, church-state relations, gender issues, civic education and human rights. While laicism mandated the privatization of religion in order to guarantee its free exercise, the staunch secularisation of French society means laicism has become a type of civil religion in itself.<sup>339</sup> Now, laicism effectively robs Muslims of their sovereign rights as the highly publicized *hijab* issue demonstrated, by demanding that they adopt the ‘uniform of France’. Today *laïcité* represents the preservation of the ‘public space’ in France, insisting that being discreet with one’s religion is an

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<sup>335</sup> CBMI, 67.

<sup>336</sup> Wharton, *Prospects and Challenges*, 4. <http://www.eliamep.gr/eliamep/files/op0402.PDF>

<sup>337</sup> See *Racist Violence in Europe* edited by Tore Bjorgo and Rob Witte (London: St. Martins Press, 1993)

<sup>338</sup> Bauman, *Identity*, 89.

<sup>339</sup> Giry, 2.

essential part of being French. However, what does being discreet mean? As Sardar writes, “A French woman with a scarf is chic, but a Muslim woman with a scarf is a threat to civilisation”.<sup>340</sup> This reaction in France resounded throughout the member states in the succeeding years, with *hijabs* and *burqas* seen by many as a visible reminder of a different ideology - one that many native Europeans feel is incompatible with western values. A report issued by the Gallup World Poll, undertaken in London, Paris and Berlin in 2006-07, assessed the antipathy that exists among the European public towards the Muslim headscarf or veil. Sixty-one percent of French people polled, believed Muslim women should remove the headscarf as a condition of integration. Similarly, 55% of British people and 49% of Germans saw the veil as a hindrance to integration.<sup>341</sup>

Islamophobia can be blatant or indirect, legalized or illegal and it is prevalent throughout all levels of European society. A report by the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia, released in 2004, tracked the events and trends in Britain in the seven years following the 1997 seminal Runnymede Report.<sup>342</sup> The report highlights progress in several areas at a national level (acknowledging religious affiliation in the 2001 Census, higher sentences for religiously aggravated offences and legislation against discrimination by employers on religious grounds). Despite these advances, the report notes that anti-Muslim prejudice is still increasing in frequency and in intensity at both a civic and social level:

The Stop and Search figures released by the Government on July 1<sup>st</sup> 2004 revealed a staggering 302% increase in the number of Asians stopped by the police in 2002/2003 under the new anti-terror laws. Even with the regrettable absence of the breakdown of these figures in terms of religious affiliation, it appears safe to assume that the single biggest increase in those stopped will have been amongst young Muslim men.

Following the race riots in Bradford in 2001, the Institute of Race Relations found a huge discrepancy between the sentences handed out to the rioters from the Bradford district of Manningham – who happened to be Muslims – and those handed out to non-Muslim rioters...<sup>343</sup>

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<sup>340</sup> Ziauddin Sardar, (1995, 5) cited in *Islam in Europe: The Politics of Religion and Community*, eds. Steve Vertoc & Ceri Peach (New York: St Martins Press, Inc., 1997), 7.

<sup>341</sup> 2006-07 Gallup World Poll,

<http://media.gallup.com/WorldPoll/PDF/WPTFMuslimsinEuropeExecSumm.pdf>

<sup>342</sup> Robin Richardson, ed. *Islamophobia: issues, challenges and action*. A report by the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia, (London: Trentham Books, 2004)

<sup>343</sup> Richardson, *Islamophobia: issues*, 36 and 38 respectively.

Other statistics document the phenomenal increase in the number of British Muslims in prison, which rose from 731 in 1991, to 6095 as of 30 September 2003.<sup>344</sup> The report also reveals that 75% of Pakistani and Bangladeshi households are classified as living in poverty, with 35% of Muslim children living in workless homes (the national average is 17.6%) and 42% of Muslim children living in overcrowded accommodation (the national average is 12.3%).<sup>345</sup> These statistics are replicated throughout the member states (Muslims make up over half of the prison population in France) and testify to the invisibility of Europe's Muslims.<sup>346</sup>

When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves or figments of their imagination – indeed everything and anything but me...<sup>347</sup>

On the campaign trail in 2006, Prime Minister Berlusconi stated “we do not want Italy to become a multiethnic, multicultural country; we are proud of our culture and of our tradition”.<sup>348</sup> Ironically, one of Italy's biggest concerns is its aging population and its desperate need of immigrants to maintain productivity. Although immigrants are vital to Italy's (and the EU's) future economic growth, Berlusconi prefers they remain invisible. Sentiments expressed at the governmental level, filter down to the workplace. Although French law prohibits statistics based on religion, frequently young applicants are asked if they are practicing Muslims.<sup>349</sup> A Parisian research company, the Institut Montaigne, discovered that applicants with a ‘traditional’ French name were five times more likely to be interviewed than applicants with an Arab name even with identical CVs.<sup>350</sup> On the street, and in the halls of government, Islamophobia is widespread throughout the EU. It distorts the image of Islam and the identity of its followers:

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<sup>344</sup> Richardson, *Islamophobia: issues*, 38.

<sup>345</sup> Richardson, *Islamophobia: issues*, 30.

<sup>346</sup> France does not collect official statistics based on religion, therefore this figure is an estimate printed in ‘Muslim extremism in France: Jailhouse jihad’ *The Economist* 18 September 2008. Accessed 19/10/08 via [http://www.economist.com/world/europe/Printerfriendly.cfm?story\\_id=12273877](http://www.economist.com/world/europe/Printerfriendly.cfm?story_id=12273877)

<sup>347</sup> Ralph Ellison, *The Invisible Man* (New York: Random House, 1952), 3.

<sup>348</sup> Il Corriere della Sera, 28 March 2006 cited in Maurizio Albahari “Religious Symbols Made in Italy” *ISIM Review* 19, Spring 2007

<sup>349</sup> Craig S. Smith, “What makes Someone French,” *The New York Times*, November, 11, 2005 accessible via [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)

<sup>350</sup> LeGrain, 265.

Identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence...Non-recognition... can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, in a distorted and reduced mode of being.<sup>351</sup>

Often in her interviews with Muslim leaders, Klausen found their main concern was the lack of recognition, “We have only one problem; it is they do not respect us and do not recognize us. We demand only one thing: respect and recognition.”<sup>352</sup> When mainstream society continues to reject the projected image, reflecting back a distorted simulacrum, they come to believe that the simulacrum is real, the hyper-real, the *uber* threat, the terrorist.

### Identity –The Lens of terrorism

Terrorism is no longer something that happens on foreign soil – it is now a part of the European landscape.<sup>353</sup> After the Madrid bombings in 2004, Gilles Kepel wrote, “Europe emerged as the primary battlefield on which the future of global Islam will be decided”.<sup>354</sup> The London bombings, a year later, on 7 July 2005 tragically reinforced this fear. At eighteen years of age, Hasib Hussain was the youngest London suicide bomber. A former school friend offered the only hint to his transformation from unassuming child to terrorist, by commenting on the racial unrest at Hasib’s former comprehensive school, “Maybe that played a part in making him feel alienated from the country of his birth and western society.”<sup>355</sup> Hasib was not an academic but loved cricket and football. However, the football pitch closed down in 2003, the same year that he dropped out of school. He ‘found Islam’, grew a beard and began to wear traditional Muslim clothes. Although his parents noticed Hasib’s attraction towards fundamentalism, they could not believe their son had become a murderer. On 7 July, they took a photo of him to the police station, fearing that he was a victim of the bombings. The London bombings were an inexplicable and indiscriminate attack on British citizens of multiple ethnic backgrounds, including Muslims. The youngest of the Hasib’s 55 victims, was a twenty-year old Muslim bank teller, Shahara Islam:

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<sup>351</sup> Taylor, 25.

<sup>352</sup> Klausen, 48.

<sup>353</sup> For a comprehensive analysis of the contemporary struggle within Islam, see Gilles Kepel, *The War for Muslims Minds: Islam and the West* (London: Harvard University Press, 2004)

<sup>354</sup> Kepel, 241.

<sup>355</sup> MailOnline, “Suicide bomber profile: The Teenager,” <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-355619/Suicide-bomber-profile-The-Teenager>

She was a thoroughly modern Muslim, a young woman who loved her Burberry plaid handbag and fashionable clothes while at the same time respecting her family's wishes that she sometimes wore traditional *shalwar kameez* at home. She went shopping in the West End of London with friends but would always be seen at the mosque for Friday prayers.<sup>356</sup>

After her death her family released a statement saying, "She was an Eastender, a Londoner and British, but above all a true Muslim and proud to be so".<sup>357</sup> How could these two young Muslims, European born, be so far apart in their practice of Islam? A small minority of disenchanted youth, recruited by politically driven extremists have thrown suspicion on all Muslims in Europe, despite the reality that the vast majority of the EU's fifteen million Muslims are peaceful, law-abiding citizens who desire to be part of European society. Parekh notes that Muslims of all ages "appreciate the rights and freedoms" available to them in Europe and they, "value the support of their fellow citizens in their struggle for equality and justice".<sup>358</sup> In Britain, an ICM Survey for the BBC (December 2002), showed that 67% of the Muslims surveyed said "they felt very or fairly patriotic".<sup>359</sup> In 2007, a Gallup World Poll revealed that 73% of Muslims in Paris feel loyal to their country of residence. This finding was replicated by 74% of Muslims in London and 72% of Muslims in Berlin. In recent years the 1995 Paris Metro bomb attacks, 9/11, the war on terror, the 2004 Madrid train bombing, the 2005 London bomb attacks, the ongoing destruction in Iraq, Iran's determination to pursue a nuclear power programme and continued unrest in Algeria have all contributed to an image of Islam as a violent and unreasonable religion. The fracas over the *hijab* in French schools and the government's subsequent ban on the headscarf provoked a reaction by the Islamic Army in Iraq who, in an attempt to force the abolition of the French law, kidnapped two French journalists in August 2004. Incidences like this, including the worldwide protest over the 'cartoon affair' in Denmark along with the fact that the attack on New York was planned by terrorists on European soil, serve as a reminder of the connection of

<sup>356</sup> Audrey Gillan, "The victim: Cashier at bank had all to live for," in *The Guardian*, July 14, 2005, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2005/jul/14/july7.uksecurity10>

<sup>357</sup> BBC News, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/england/london/4738141.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/london/4738141.stm)

<sup>358</sup> Parekh, Bhikhu, 'Europe, liberalism and the 'Muslim question'' in *Multiculturalism, Muslims & Citizenship: A European Approach*, eds. Tariq Modood, Anna Triandafylidou & Ricard Zapata-Barrero (London: Routledge, 2006), 182.

<sup>359</sup> Cited in Parekh, "Europe, liberalism," 182.

Muslims in Europe to the wider network of Islam, to the Muslim brotherhood, to the worldwide *umma*. As Parekh comments:

the terrorist attacks in New York, Madrid and London had a traumatic effect on Europeans. Hitherto they had seen Muslims as a culturally threatening but manageable presence; they now developed a morbid fear of them.<sup>360</sup>

The idea that the radicalisation of Western Muslims in Europe is the result of a worldwide crisis in Islam originating out of the Middle East compounds this fear. However, Roy notes that, apart from the Madrid attack in 2004, terrorist action in Europe is rarely linked to global jihads.<sup>361</sup> Radicals tend to be ethnically diverse, western educated converts to fundamentalism who do not represent the Islamic traditions of their parents. According to Roy, they represent a “lost generation, unmoored from traditional societies and cultures, frustrated by a Western society that does not meet their expectation”.<sup>362</sup> A study conducted by the Bielefeld Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence, supports this hypothesis. Released in 1997, the study revealed that 35.7% of third-generation Turkish youth felt “inclined towards religious fundamentalism of a violent nature” and 56% “rejected an adaptation to the Western way of life”.<sup>363</sup> Despite being educated in Germany, fluent in the German language and cognisant with German customs and culture these youth felt attracted:

by the fundamentalist version of their root culture,...after their attempt to find a more open identity between the root culture and the mainstream culture of their country of adoption has failed painfully.<sup>364</sup>

Excluded from mainstream culture, some young Muslims reject the ‘space’ allocated to minority societies and seek instead to redefine the ‘space’ for themselves. One way of silencing extremist voices, therefore, is to prevent social exclusion. As Roy argues:

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<sup>360</sup> Parekh, 104.

<sup>361</sup> Roy, Olivier, ‘Islamic Terrorist Radicalisation in Europe’ in Samir Amghar et al, *European Islam: Challenges for Society and Public Policy*, (Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies, 2007), 54.

<sup>362</sup> Roy, *European Islam*, 55.

<sup>363</sup> Heitmeyer, W./Muller, J./Schroeder, J.: *Verlockender Fundamentalismus, Türkische Jugendliche in Deutschland*. Frankfurt/M. 1997 cited in Meyer, *Identity Mania*, 47 and 49 respectively.

<sup>364</sup> Meyer, *Identity Mania*, 50.



A second and third generation of Muslim migrants may recast their feelings of being excluded by importing a psychological frontier to their spaces of social exclusion in suburbs or inner cities. Islam is cast as the “otherness” of Europe and thus may be cast as an alternative identity for youngsters in search of a reactive identity.<sup>365</sup>

In her book, *Reconciliation*, the draft of which was finished on the morning of her assassination, Benazir Bhutto (returned exile and parliamentary candidate for Pakistan) reinforced the concern over Muslim identity. She dispelled notions of a clash between civilisations, arguing that the clash is not between Islam and the West but rather it is a clash within Islam. It is a “critical battle for the hearts and souls of the successor generation of Muslim leaders, and for the passion of the Muslims around the world...”<sup>366</sup> Kepel concurs, arguing that:

The most important battle in the war for Muslim minds during the next decade will be fought not in Palestine or Iraq but in these communities of believers on the outskirts of London, Paris, and other European cities, where Islam is already a growing part of the West. If European societies are able to integrate these Muslim populations, handicapped as they are by dispossession, and steer them toward prosperity, this new generation of Muslims may become the Islamic vanguard of the next decade, offering their co-religionists a new vision of the faith and a way out of the dead-end politics that has paralysed their countries of origin”.<sup>367</sup>

Bhutto argues that the internal and external conflicts in relation to Islam are in fact, “a battle between the past and the future” and that Islam is facing a crisis between “inflexible traditionalism and adaptable modernity”.<sup>368</sup> Inextricably caught in this battle for Muslims minds, Europe has a responsibility to provide the ‘space’ and support systems – politically, theologically and socially - for its 15 million Muslims to establish a peaceful, pluralistic Islam that rejects extremism. A ‘space’ in which parents have access to jobs, families have access to housing, food and clothes and children have access to education without discrimination. Where governments provide opportunity and address the every day concerns of its people, it is harder for religious fundamentalism and political extremism to take root. Camilleri warns that Europe has a vital role to play in this transitional crisis and the way in which European leaders and society handle the “problems posed by potentially ghettoised

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<sup>365</sup> Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 45.

<sup>366</sup> Bhutto, 272.

<sup>367</sup> Kepel, 8.

<sup>368</sup> Bhutto, 273.

rapidly growing Muslim minorities” could well “shape the geopolitics of the Middle East and Islam’s response to the challenge of modernity”<sup>369</sup>. The question of identity is pivotal to this war for Muslim hearts and minds in Europe, for ultimately, the crisis is one of self-definition - it is a battle for the right to belong and the right to be different.

### *Emerging Identity - Euro-Islam*

Muslims in Europe today are not only facing problems associated with being part of a minority group struggling with inadequate housing, restricted employment opportunities and rejection of their cultural and religious identity. Islam itself is in a state of flux caught between the traditional ways and the increasing imposition of western values. Post modernity is an era in which ethnic and religious borders no longer correspond with geographical territories, it is an era defined by perspective – by “minds, attitudes and discourses.”<sup>370</sup> Though globalisation opened borders, standardizing socio-economic and political structures, it has not created a unity of outlook.<sup>371</sup> By facilitating large-scale immigration and the mass movement of Islamic peoples to western countries, globalisation resulted in the cultural fragmentation of Islam.<sup>372</sup> Islamic fundamentalism arose as the result of Islam’s confrontation with modernity and the associated challenge to traditional ideology coupled with the rejection of Islam as a European religion. Confronted with the restraints imposed by the Western values system, Islam remains “suspended between adjustment to the ongoing changes and resistance to the needed accommodation”.<sup>373</sup> Likewise, Muslims in Europe find them-selves caught between adjustment to European societal values and a resistance to changes that impinge on their cultural and religious identity. Tibi argues that, “Islamic civilization is at a crossroads oscillating in determining its identity between cultural and political Islam.”<sup>374</sup> Young Muslims in Europe are facing an identity crisis and a choice in terms of their faith. A return to what Roy calls Neo-fundamentalism, a closed, scriptural, conservative form of Islam based on *sharia*

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<sup>369</sup> Joseph Camilleri, “Europe between Islam and the United States: interests, identity and geopolitics,” *Global Change, Peace & Security* 20, no.1(2008), 23 and 9 respectively.

<sup>370</sup> Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 20.

<sup>371</sup> Tibi, *Between Culture*, 189.

<sup>372</sup> Bassam Tibi, *The Challenge of Fundamentalism* (London: University of California Press, 2002), 6.

<sup>373</sup> Tibi, *Between Culture*, xi.

<sup>374</sup> Tibi, *Between Culture*, 78.

(Islamic law), which believes in a universal community of all Muslims (*Umma*) ,or the political normalization of Islam within the framework of the nation-state.<sup>375</sup>

This identity crisis is compounded by the fact that young Muslims find them-selves living a ‘double life’ caught between the traditional teachings of foreign imams who do not speak the local European language and have no understanding of European customs, and the modern western society in which they live. Klausen cites the Muslim Labour peer, Nazir Ahmed:

Young British Muslims go to the mosque and hear an imam deliver a sermon in a foreign language about the past. It has no relevance to...the problems affecting Muslims in Britain. At the same time, it fills them with absurd notions about the British. They leave the mosque feeling angry and confused and walk straight into the arms of extremist groups such as al-Muhajiroun which talk to them in a language they understand.<sup>376</sup>

An outcast from school, Hasib Huassain (the youngest London bomber) complained about the contradictory messages he heard in different mosques, saying that he would ‘go his own way’, with disastrous consequences.<sup>377</sup> Klausen argues that it is a ‘misreading of the facts’ to presuppose that terrorist attacks are carried out solely by young Muslims who feel socially alienated because the terrorists behind the London bombings belonged to an extremist network who coordinated their assaults over a long period of time.<sup>378</sup> However, the study of the Bielefeld Institute supports the theory that marginalised youth who seek a sense of belonging are susceptible to recruitment by extremist cells. As evidenced by one young German Turk, “The Germans reject us, the Turks in Turkey do not understand us, but the Muslims accept us”.<sup>379</sup>

Ramadan argues that schoolchildren find themselves caught between being encouraged to question everything and to express themselves at European schools with non-Muslims, and passively having to absorb verses of Islam dating back to the ninth and tenth century by foreign imams educated in *madrasses*, leading to an “unhealthy

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<sup>375</sup> Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 2.

<sup>376</sup> Klausen, 115.

<sup>377</sup> The Independent: The boy who grew up to bomb the NO 30 bus, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/hasib-hussain-the-boy-who-grew-up-to-bomb-the-no-30-bus-498746.htm>

<sup>378</sup> Klausen, ix.

<sup>379</sup> Meyer, *Identity Mania*, 50.

schizophrenia”.<sup>380</sup> It is imperative, therefore, for Western Europe to encourage the development of native-born, European educated imams who can teach an Islam that equips young Muslims with the means to live in the west. For Roy this goes hand in hand with acknowledging that multiculturalism and assimilation have failed because of the west’s insistence on embedding the religion of Islam within the culture of Islam.<sup>381</sup> Roy and Tibi argue that Islam is both a culture and a religion, and that confusing the two exacerbates the failure of integration in Europe. Rather than pushing for an ethno-cultural identity, the majority of European Muslims simply want recognition for Islam, in the same way other religions are recognised (especially Christianity), and to be allowed to practice their faith without being stigmatised. According to Roy, the recognition by the state of Islam as a ‘mere’ religion, on par with other religions would prevent the politicalisation of Islam, thus isolating extremists and preventing them from “building a political constituency”.<sup>382</sup> Tibi concurs, arguing that due to deterritorialisation and globalisation, Islam has become politicized making it difficult for Muslims to accommodate the ‘societal change’ involved with living in the West. If reformed, however, Islam can “be incorporated into a religious and cultural pluralism in western societies” because Islam is not only a religion but also a system of cultural symbols through which Muslims see the world.<sup>383</sup> A cultural system that not only reflects past social patterns but one that is also able to influence the present, even as it is simultaneously being shaped by the present.<sup>384</sup> Although Muslims learn that the law of Islam is immutable, Islam as a cultural system is capable of fluidity and can embrace secular democracy and human rights given the opportunity.<sup>385</sup>

Accommodating societal change, however, does not mean uniformity and the onus is on Europe to adopt a cultural pluralism. An emphasis on the honouring of legitimate differences would enable Muslims to truly become European citizens and allow for the separation of Islam as a cultural identity, and Islam as a politicised identity.<sup>386</sup> Europe needs to guard against “Eurocentric attitudes of exclusion” that, through alienation only

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<sup>380</sup> Ramadan, *Western Muslims*, 127.

<sup>381</sup> Roy, *European Islam*, 56.

<sup>382</sup> Roy, *European Islam*, 60.

<sup>383</sup> Tibi, *Between Culture*, 188.

<sup>384</sup> Tibi, *Accommodation*, 37.

<sup>385</sup> Tibi, *Accommodation*, 74.

<sup>386</sup> Tibi, *Between Culture*, xv.

serve to increase the appeal of fundamentalism.<sup>387</sup> Although, historically Islam has been “a pragmatic and accommodating religion” alienating Muslims in Europe only increases the appeal of Islamic extremism for second-generation youths living in ghettos and facing job discrimination.<sup>388</sup> Second and third-generation Muslim youth who perceive themselves, to be disadvantaged provide fertile ground for Roy’s Neo-fundamentalism. A minority within a minority tired of struggling against social injustices and the failure of Europe to empower all of its residents both politically and socially, they find themselves unable to identify with the nation-state. Their identity struggle can “translate into a spiritual vacuum, which extremist recruiters fill with their own narrow interpretations of Islam via the internet and direct interaction”<sup>389</sup>. Thus, their ‘imagined community’ becomes one of a politicized Islam, a “defensive-cultural phenomenon” directed against the West.<sup>390</sup> Islam then becomes the linchpin, recreating identities and connections “separated by geographies, languages and cultures.”<sup>391</sup>

### Muslims are Europeans too.

There is a new wind blowing across Western Europe heralding a European Islam “based on a new epistemology of faith and a new hermeneutics of textual interpretation”.<sup>392</sup> In her interviews with Muslim elites in the EU, Klausen discovered embryonic ‘national faith-based umbrella groups’ who support integration and are focussing on political participation at a national level.<sup>393</sup> Most of these political Muslim leaders are new immigrants, educated, talented, moderates, who came to Europe primarily as university students or refugees. They are part of a small but growing number of Muslims who are now active in all levels of European society - civic and national - and have the ability to influence policymakers and leaders. Alongside this vanguard are third and fourth-generation immigrants who (like Shahara Islam before her untimely death) are developing de-ethnicised European-

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<sup>387</sup> Tibi, *Between Culture*, xv.

<sup>388</sup> Wharton, “Prospects and Challenges,” 11.

<sup>389</sup> Fried, Daniel, Ass. Sec. for European Affairs (2006), ‘Overview of Islamist Extremism in Europe’. Testimony before the Subcommittee on European Affairs of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, U.S. Department of State. <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/64192.htm>

<sup>390</sup> Tibi, *Between Culture*, 189.

<sup>391</sup> Jocelyne Cesari, *When Islam and Democracy Meet: Muslims in Europe and in the United States* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004), 179.

<sup>392</sup> Klausen, 205.

<sup>393</sup> Klausen, 28.

Muslim identities relative to their country of residence as “opposed to the ethno-national culture” of first generation immigrants.<sup>394</sup>

Muslim leaders across the world agree that reform must come but it cannot “be imposed externally, especially if it violates a people’s traditions and culture”.<sup>395</sup> It is this violation of tradition/religion and culture in Europe, which led to the formation of resistance identities among Muslim youth. Benign neglect to outright racism forced Muslims to take the defensive path and pushed dislocated youth towards fundamentalism. Europe insisted on integrating Muslims as a separate religio-cultural group rather than welcoming them as equals who have the right to practice whatever religion they chose. Rights that ‘native’ Europeans fought for in the past and now ‘rightly’ take for granted. Ironically, as Kepel argues, the rudiments for unleashing the forces of reform in the Muslim world, *is* the separation of the secular and religious realms. Indeed, Cesari maintains there is evidence of a nascent “acculturation to secular society” occurring in Islam with the emergence of numerous “transethnic” forms of Islam.<sup>396</sup> However, this is not an acceptance of state refusal to recognise Islam as a European faith nor is it an acceptance of the imposition of *laïcité*. One of Klausen’s interviewees states, “Muslims are always explaining who they are *not* and never have a chance to say who they *are*”.<sup>397</sup> For Muslims, separating the secular and religious spheres means separating Islam as a culture from Islam as a religion, and conferring the same rights and privileges on Islam as other religions enjoy. It also means accepting the right of cultural difference. As Ellison’s invisible man remarked, “Now I know all men are different and that all life is divided and that only in division is there true health...Let man keep his many parts and you’ll have no tyrant states”.<sup>398</sup>

Acceptance of difference provides a security, thus loosening the bonds of resistance identities. It enables immigrants to move out of ethnically concentrated areas and to “acquire cultural self-confidence, [and] improve their economic prospects” because

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<sup>394</sup> Cesari, 178.

<sup>395</sup> Kepel, 293.

<sup>396</sup> Cesari, 178.

<sup>397</sup> Klausen, 85.

<sup>398</sup> Ellison, 435.

they feel safe.<sup>399</sup> Kepel posits that, the time is ripe for the “hybridization of two distinct cultures” and that it is possible:

that a new generation of Muslim thinkers will emerge – men and women with a universalist perspective...[who] have opportunities to exercise democratic rights...and will present a new face of Islam – reconciled with modernity – to the larger world.<sup>400</sup>

One such person is a Dutch Muslim, Hikmat Khan who argues that Muslims must do more to protect them-selves from extremists. He suggests a ban on foreign imams and calls for mosques and Islamic organisations to be more accessible and for Islamic schools to be open to all. He also suggests that Muslim leaders must publicly acknowledge women’s equality, and that there should be more emphasis of Muslim pastoral care in hospitals and prisons.<sup>401</sup> Other Muslim elites agree that it is vital for member states to provide public funding for Islamic schools in order to prevent outside influence from countries like Turkey and Saudi Arabia who are not committed to a moderate Islam.<sup>402</sup> Roy agrees there needs to be a tighter control on fund-raising and subsidising from abroad and advocates establishing links between Islamic teaching institutions and European universities. He also argues that citizenship should be favoured above any communal affiliations.<sup>403</sup> Citizenship is ultimately about national identity, about a two-way process of ownership. It is both a validation of the citizen by the country and a validation of the country by the citizen. With other reformists, Bhutto reminds Muslims of the need to return to *ijtihad*, which means ‘reason’ to reinterpret their faith according to their situation. Klausen concurs:

*Ijtihad*, the practice of using reason to reinterpret the meaning and application of religious law, has become the rallying cry for self-styled moderate progressive Muslims, who want to bridge faith with integrated lifestyles and professional occupations.<sup>404</sup>

While Muslim extremists portray Islam as dictatorial, intolerant, bigoted and fanatical, a new generation of European Muslims are heading the call to revisit the

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<sup>399</sup> Bhikhu, *Identity*, 91.

<sup>400</sup> Kepel, 294 and 295 respectively.

<sup>401</sup> LeGrain, 313-4.

<sup>402</sup> Klausen, 15.

<sup>403</sup> Roy, *European Islam*, 60.

<sup>404</sup> Klausen, 9.

teachings of Islam for them-selves. They are discovering that Islam is compatible with western democracy and that it is possible, in the words of Mohammad Iqbal to:

Let the Muslim of today appreciate his position, reconstruct his social life in the light of ultimate principles, and evolve, out of the hitherto partially revealed purpose of Islam, that spiritual democracy which is the ultimate aim of Islam.<sup>405</sup> Muslim poet-philosopher Mohammad Iqbal (1877-1938)

Historically, the West and zealous Islamic leaders have portrayed Islam as a single monolithic entity, whereas in fact, Islam has always contained “a de facto plurality of opinions...as to what Islam is...”.<sup>406</sup> As Ramadan argues, Islam has always provided the means for Muslims to live peacefully amongst non-Muslims:

Islamic law and jurisprudence *command* Muslim individuals to submit to the body of positive law enforced in their country of residence in the name of the tacit moral agreement that already supports their very presence.<sup>407</sup>

Thus, concerns regarding the development of a Muslim European identity hinge not so much on the adaptability of Islam to the west, but more on the adaptability of the ‘tacit moral agreement that already supports their presence’. It hinges on the malleability of Western European states and mainstream society to allow a European Islam to evolve. Identity is defined both in dialogue with, and in the struggle against the significant others in our lives.<sup>408</sup> The significant others for Muslims in Europe encompass not only their familial and cultural group but also the majority socio-cultural or political group within their countries of residence. Taylor writes that modernity has brought with it not so much a “need for recognition but the conditions in which the attempt to be recognised can fail”.<sup>409</sup> Integration and the accommodation of Muslims in Europe, rests on the recognition that Muslims are Europeans too.

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<sup>405</sup> Bhutto, 277.

<sup>406</sup> Wahid, K. H. Abdurrahman, cited in Bhutto, 281.

<sup>407</sup> Ramadan, *Western Muslims*, 95.

<sup>408</sup> Taylor, 33.

<sup>409</sup> Taylor, 35.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **MANY VOICES, FEW LISTENERS?**

“The danger when calling too systematically for intercultural dialogue is that of ‘culturalisation’ of differences. We run the risk of misusing culture and intercultural dialogue as a way of hiding social and economic differences, and of stigmatising these differences as cultural”.  
Odile Chenal, Deputy Director, European Cultural Foundation.<sup>410</sup>

#### *Introduction.*

Stakeholders and academics agree for intercultural dialogue to be real, it has to be a catalyst for change, an interactive process through which disagreement and discord are transformed into action. As noted earlier in chapter one, intercultural dialogue is more than just verbal communication between individuals, groups and organizations from diverse cultural backgrounds. It is also an ethos, an attitude and a journey, the aim of which is to change perspectives, eliminate prejudices and “to increase participation and the freedom and ability to make choices”.<sup>411</sup> It is also fundamental to the formation and implementation of integration policies, which enable different ethnic minorities to access the same rights and conditions as their neighbours. The seven EU debates provided an opportunity to emphasise the importance of intercultural dialogue, the need for political responsibility and the value of education as a means to promote understanding and social cohesion in order to aid the integration process.

The debates were organised by the European Commission in co-operation with the European Policy Centre (EPC).<sup>412</sup> Held in the Résidence Palace in Brussels, they featured a panel of experts representing the European Commission, the European Parliament, civic society groups, academics and religious leaders. Shada Islam, journalist and Senior Programme Executive at the European Policy Centre, chaired the debates. Four guest speakers featured at each debate, which were open to the public and provided an opportunity for stakeholders and interest groups to meet and discuss the various issues involved in accommodating diverse cultures. The EYID

<sup>410</sup> Teresa Kücher, EU Observer, “EU launches intercultural dialogue year amid criticism,” (09/01/08) <http://euobserver.com/879/25405>

<sup>411</sup> ERICarts: Sharing Diversity, 2008 (Executive Summary), 12. [www.ericarts.org](http://www.ericarts.org)

<sup>412</sup> The EPC is an independent policy research institute based in Brussels. Further information is available via [www.ceps.eu](http://www.ceps.eu)

website posted pre-event background papers prior to each event, as well as wrap-up papers post debate, written by various stakeholders. The EYID website also provided short edited highlights from each debate as well as news releases. This study is limited by the fact that full copies of all of the speeches were not available. However, themes are evident throughout the debates, which can be linked to the recurring strands involved in the contemporary discourse in Europe, regarding the integration of its ethnic minorities including its Muslim population.

### EU Debate One.

#### **Integrating Conversations: The Impact of Migration on Intercultural Dialogue.**

The four guest speakers in the first debate included: Franco Frattini, European Commissioner for Justice, Freedom and Security; Bashy Quraishy, Chair of the Advisory Council for the European Network Against Racism; Joris Rijbroek, Deputy Director, Social Cohesion for the city of Amsterdam and Cem Özdemir, a German MEP of Turkish origin.

The pre-event paper to this debate, written by the EPC, highlighted the fact that Europe is a continent of increasing immigration and this has resulted in rapid social change in recent years.<sup>413</sup> These changes fuel concerns that the “influx of migrants will disrupt the social fabric and dilute national identities” leading to an increase in the fragmentation of Europe’s communities.<sup>414</sup> The paper said, intercultural dialogue could be an important mechanism to facilitate cohesion and understanding by minimising confusion and miscommunication but it must avoid being a “dialogue between a self-defined ‘host society’ and a single migrant group”.<sup>415</sup> For intercultural dialogue to be successful, it must be reciprocal.

The second speaker, Bashy Quraishy echoed this sentiment, commenting that previous attempts at dialogue all too often disintegrated into monologues with the majority society expecting the minority to change. Quraishy argued that it is the majority society, which holds the power to orchestrate change. He said, “Minorities do not have the power to ask for a dialogue based on mutual understanding. The

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<sup>413</sup> Elizabeth Collett, “Migration and Integration Background Paper for European Year of Intercultural Dialogue,” 1. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>414</sup> Collett, 1.

<sup>415</sup> Collett, 2.

majority has the key to the front door, not the minority”.<sup>416</sup> Quraishy stressed that Europe will continue to need immigrants because of the “dramatic falls in the European birth rate” but for integration to be successful, intercultural dialogue cannot occur “in a vacuum” since dialogue is invariably linked to economic and social preconditions.<sup>417</sup> He argued that many studies highlight the fact that minority groups often faced high unemployment, substandard housing, education problems and racism. Quraishy said, “Minorities do not seek cultural domination, but want language training, good relations with their neighbours, education for their children and access to the legal system”.<sup>418</sup>

Justice Commissioner, Franco Frattini, who spoke first, strongly refuted clash theories saying, “There is no ongoing clash” and dialogue can help to “eradicate the abuse of religion and culture”.<sup>419</sup> Frattini announced the establishment of the European Fund for Integration, initially proposed in 2005.<sup>420</sup> Frattini emphasised that successful integration required active participation not only at the EU level but also from local governments, civil society, and through establishing good practices at the grassroots level.<sup>421</sup> The Commissioner stressed, however that “integration and dialogue do not imply accepting ideas that contradict European values of individual rights, human dignity [or] equality between the sexes”.<sup>422</sup> Frattini underscored the importance of education, saying that children “are the best ambassadors” and finished by saying that there “can be no immigration without integration”.<sup>423</sup>

Joris Rijbroek agreed with Quraishy that integration policies must focus on social and economic preconditions because “in the end real dialogue is in the streets of every city in Europe”.<sup>424</sup> Rijbroek commented that over half of Amsterdam’s population is now of non-native descent and therefore the city was focussing on

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<sup>416</sup> Küchler, “Frattini promotes intercultural dialogue,” <http://euobserver.com/879/25789>

<sup>417</sup> EPC wrap-up paper of the first Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>418</sup> EPC wrap-up paper of the first Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>419</sup> Küchler, “Frattini promotes intercultural dialogue,” <http://euobserver.com/879/25789>

<sup>420</sup> The general objective of the Integration Fund will be to contribute to national efforts to provide a response to the multidimensional issue of integration of third-country nationals of different cultures, religions, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds to settle and to take active part in all aspects of European societies. [http://ec.europa.eu/justice\\_home/fsj/immigration/integration/fsj-immigration\\_integration\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/fsj/immigration/integration/fsj-immigration_integration_en.htm)

<sup>421</sup> News Archive, EU Observer. <http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu/962.0.html>

<sup>422</sup> EPC, wrap-up paper of the first Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>423</sup> EPC, wrap-up paper of the first Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>424</sup> Video of the first Brussels Debate. [www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu](http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu)

developing programmes that confronted polarisation and attempted to stimulate social cohesion. He mentioned the initiative entitled “We, the peoples of Amsterdam” which worked with local councils to unite minority networks.<sup>425</sup> The “City Olympics” was another initiative, which provided an opportunity for culturally diverse city districts to compete in various disciplines such as cooking or dancing. These programmes, he said, were a direct response to minimise the violent backlash against the Muslim community that occurred after the killing of Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh.

Cem Özdemir wrapped up the debate by reiterating the fact that integration policy should be a top propriety at all levels of governance. He also stressed the need for a separation between politics and religion alongside a respect for national constitutions. He remarked that young people from immigrant societies wanted to be able to interact with those in their host countries without having to be concerned about ethnic or religious issues.<sup>426</sup> All four speakers thus agreed that while intercultural dialogue is essential to help integrate migrants, intercultural dialogue should not be confused with inter-religious dialogue “as most minorities do not want religious domination, but for their basic needs for housing, education, etc, to be met”.<sup>427</sup>

### EU Debate Two.

#### **Negotiating Differences: A Responsibility of Artists and Cultural Institutions.**

The four guest speakers in the second debate included: Ján Figel', European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth; Ahmet Polat, a Dutch-Turkish photographer; Jette Sandahl, Director of the City Museum of Copenhagen and Claire Gibault, French MEP.

This debate was organised by the European Commission in cooperation with the European Forum for Arts and Heritage (EFAH), (now called Culture Action Europe) and the European Cultural Foundation (ECF).<sup>428</sup> The pre-event background and wrap-

<sup>425</sup> EPC, wrap-up paper of the first Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>426</sup> EPC, wrap-up paper of the first Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>427</sup> EPC, wrap-up paper of the first Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>428</sup> EFAH (established 1992) represents 5,000 members across 25 EU Member States. EFAH monitors EU legislation and policy in cultural affairs and provides a voice for all cultural associations, operators and artists in the EU. ECF (established 1954) is especially committed to young Europeans and contributes to the empowerment of civil society in the field of arts and culture. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

up papers were prepared by the ECF and the EFAH who are initiators of the Civil Society Platform for Intercultural Dialogue known as the Rainbow Platform.<sup>429</sup>

The aim of this debate was to explore the different ways in which artists and cultural institutions can challenge identity perceptions and facilitate an appreciation of “*non-fixed, multiple identities*”.<sup>430</sup> The paper stated, “These myriad identities, fragile or robust, are in continuous evolution and negation. What is more, they are the soil out of which the Europe of the future will grow”.<sup>431</sup> The paper stressed that artists are especially important because they challenge people’s visions of the world, their interpretation of the facts and their place within this perceived world.

Photographer Ahmet Polat, whose father is Turkish, was born in the Netherlands. He shared how the medium of photography enabled him to reconcile two vastly different aspects of his identity. Ahmet stressed that the artist’s role is to be at the forefront of questioning identity and that artists can challenge awareness of other identities and thus build bridges between cultures.<sup>432</sup> He emphasised that artists had the ability to understand another’s perspective saying, “If you do not have the sensibility or just the idea that you can try to put yourself into somebody else’s shoes then how are you going to talk about them, how are you going to photograph them, how are you going to make movies about them, tell stories about them?”<sup>433</sup>

Jette Sandahl also focussed her speech on the importance of identity, which though intrinsically linked to history and tradition, must also adapt to modern pressures arising from living in multicultural societies. “Identity is continuously reinterpreted and it is as much a concept of the future as it is a concept of the past. It contains who we want to be, where we are going, the future as we dream of it”.<sup>434</sup> Sandahl explained that while several European countries created cultural policies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to promote active involvement for all, these policies were rendered ineffective due to a “lack of access to economic and education resources” for

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<sup>429</sup> The Rainbow Platform aims to promote intercultural change in three ways: societal, organisational and through policy. Access [www.rainbowplatform.org](http://www.rainbowplatform.org) for further information.

<sup>430</sup> EFAH & ECF, background paper, second Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>431</sup> EFAH & ECF, background paper, second Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>432</sup> News Archive, EU Observer. <http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu/1072.0.html>

<sup>433</sup> Video of the second Brussels Debate. [www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu](http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu)

<sup>434</sup> Video of the second Brussels Debate. [www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu](http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu)

minority groups.<sup>435</sup> Sandahl posited that access to culture is still class based in Europe and systematic exclusions were common. She stressed the need for a cultural democracy. Sandahl also challenged the role of museums as caretakers of culture. “Museums have a responsibility of transmitting memory, traditions, history and a sense of identity” but must also transmit “identity as aspiration and hope, as a striving toward the future. Seeing, understanding and even empathizing with the view of the Other is a core issue for contemporary society” and through exhibitions museums can show “that different ways of life carry their own qualities that are sometimes beyond simple comparisons and hierarchies”.<sup>436</sup>

Ján Figel’ remarked, “*politics grow from culture*” and questioned how a Europe of knowledge could be built without first providing sufficient resources to build a strong cultural society based on dialogue.<sup>437</sup> Figel’ commented that artists, “have a capacity and ability to express...to show reality, to stress some of the aspects which are not so visible” and therefore art has the ability to connect value systems and open new spaces for communication.<sup>438</sup>

Claire Gibault, French MEP and orchestra director said, “the artist has a central role in intercultural dialogue and the EU must ensure that s/he had the means to play it”.<sup>439</sup> Mobility was a difficulty that artists often faced and she said this was a policy area that needed to be addressed. Ahmet Polat also mentioned artistic censorship and restrictions to mobility depending on ethnicity.

### EU Debate Three.

#### **New Horizons: Active Citizenship to Bridge Interreligious Divides.**

The four guest speakers in the third debate included: Ján Figel’, European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth; Imam Dr. Abduljalil Sajid, Chairman of the Muslim Council for Religious and Racial Harmony UK; Nadine Larchy, European Vice-President of the International Council of Jewish Women and Mario Mauro, Vice-President of the European Parliament.

<sup>435</sup> Sandahl, Jette, Speech. [www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu](http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu)

<sup>436</sup> Sandahl, Jette, Speech. [www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu](http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu)

<sup>437</sup> EFAH & ECF wrap-up paper, second Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>438</sup> EFAH & ECF wrap-up paper, second Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>439</sup> EFAH & ECF wrap-up paper, second Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

The background paper to this debate, written by the EPC, noted that while several initiatives provide important opportunities for dialogue between policy makers and church leaders who are committed to promoting harmonious community relationships, tension between people of different faiths remain. One way of addressing this issue was to encourage active citizenship where “everyone has access to equal opportunities for economic and political participation, and takes part in public service, volunteer work and other efforts to improve life for all citizens”.<sup>440</sup>

Chairperson Shada Islam opened the debate saying the aim of inter-religious dialogue was to ensure an inclusive society and to promote active citizenship. Imam Sajid agreed saying that “People are discriminated against because of their differences” and “The EU needs to harmonise laws across Europe to produce a “single equality” and fight discrimination. We are all Europeans and can share resources and bring about change through active citizenship”.<sup>441</sup> He explained active citizenship as “a democratic process in which everyone’s voice is heard and differences are aired within the rule of law.”<sup>442</sup> He also stressed the need for “working together through sharing common projects and going to the grassroots, not only top level dialogue which happens everywhere. I want ground level dialogue, bottom up approach, where we get active citizenship and respect for all our societies”.<sup>443</sup> He also dispelled the idea that religion provokes wars, saying, “97% of wars are based on the desire for power and land, not religion”.<sup>444</sup>

Nadine Larchy explained that for some religion is part of their identity and it must be respected before dialogue can begin. She herself had learnt, through an encounter experience with Catholic, Protestant and Jewish families, that words have different meanings for different groups, hence the importance of inter-religious dialogue.<sup>445</sup> For Larchy, education was the key and she believed that intercultural dialogue should be about “working with children and teaching them about different faiths, to understand difference and to learn to respect the difference of opinions and ideas”.<sup>446</sup>

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<sup>440</sup> EPC, background paper, third Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>441</sup> EPC, wrap-up paper, third Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>442</sup> EPC, wrap-up paper, third Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>443</sup> Video of the third Brussels Debate. [www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu](http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu)

<sup>444</sup> EPC, wrap-up paper, third Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>445</sup> EPC, wrap-up paper, third Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>446</sup> Video, third Brussels Debate. [www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu](http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu)



She related an example of where religion was seen as negating national identity when a child questioned her as to whether a Jewish girl could marry a Belgium boy. Larchy also remarked that politicians and the media often mixed politics and religion and this simplified the issue.<sup>447</sup>

Mario Mauro endorsed the necessity of education as an effective vehicle for intercultural dialogue, stressing that Europe needed a “pedagogical or educational policy that helps develop each individual to the full”.<sup>448</sup> Education could teach respect for other value systems and provide “indispensable elements” for a vision inclusive of all cultures. Ján Figel’ agreed that education was a uniting tool. Understanding the past, he said, helps people to “combine our values and wisdom, bringing solidarity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century”. In response to a question from the floor, Commissioner Figel’ said that education policy must not only boost technological excellence but must also stimulate an emphasis on human values in order to build tomorrow’s European citizens.<sup>449</sup> When questioned about the meaning of Article 16 of the Lisbon Treaty<sup>450</sup> Commissioner Figel’ remarked that open and transparent dialogue would be maintained with both religious and non-religious institutions and said that “after 50 years of evolution, [it was] very normal, very natural when we speak about Europe of people not Europe of business”.<sup>451</sup>

#### EU Debate Four.

#### **Couscous Culture: Is that what Intercultural Dialogue in the Workplace is all about?**

The four guest speakers in the fourth debate included: Vladimír Špidla, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities; Benoît van Grieken, Corporate Social Responsibility Manager of Randstad, Belgium; Chibo Onyeji, Vice-President of the European Network Against Racism and Kyriacos Triantaphyllides, MEP.

<sup>447</sup> EPC, wrap-up paper, third Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>448</sup> EPC, wrap-up paper, third Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>449</sup> EPC, wrap-up paper, third Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>450</sup> Article 16c of the Lisbon Treaty protects the rights of religious and non-religious organisations, “recognising their identity and their specific contribution”. Official Journal of the European Union. C306/51 Vol. 50. 17.12.2007. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/>

<sup>451</sup> Video of the third Brussels Debate. [www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu](http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu)



The pre-event background paper, written by ENAR commented that increasing migration and subsequent diversity in the workforce means that cultural diversity is “not only a foreign affairs issue, but an internal and social one”.<sup>452</sup> The paper maintained that ‘Interculture’ is a process and the aim of intercultural dialogue is to facilitate a change within people. Considering that workplaces are microcosms of the wider community and often reflect privileged power structures and discriminatory practices found in mainstream society, could intercultural dialogue effect real change in the workplace or was diversity merely a symbol?<sup>453</sup> A member of the audience welcomed the opportunity to attend the debate saying,

I represent the word ‘intercultural’ in my mind. I was born in Africa, I was raised in an EU country (UK) and I’ve moved to Brussels in order to work so I feel that I understand and really embody what intercultural dialogue is all about, so I really wanted to hear what’s being done by the EU.

Commissioner Špidla stated that working was not just about earning money, it also “helps to give each of us a role in society”.<sup>454</sup> He stressed that immigrant workers contribute more than just their labour. They also contribute “their culture, their lifestyle, their habits as citizens and consumers”.<sup>455</sup> Diversity could therefore benefit companies economically as well as socially because businesses which accommodated diversity and condemned discrimination, were able to increase their productivity, enlarge customer bases, fill labour shortages and enhance their company reputations. Despite this, he said, companies were still reluctant to instigate diversity management policies and thus, the EU needed to legislate in order to “guarantee effective enforcement mechanism and dissuasive sanctions, accompanied by positive action measures”.<sup>456</sup> Commissioner Špidla emphasised the Commission’s commitment to diversity training initiatives, saying that while international groups understood the advantages of diversity policies, smaller businesses did not.

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<sup>452</sup> ENAR, background paper, fourth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>453</sup> ENAR, background paper, fourth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>454</sup> Commissioner Špidla speech, fourth Brussels Debate.  
[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/speeches/2008/sp\\_080616\\_11-29-57-en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/speeches/2008/sp_080616_11-29-57-en.pdf)

<sup>455</sup> Commissioner Špidla speech, fourth Brussels Debate.  
[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/speeches/2008/sp\\_080616\\_11-29-57-en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/speeches/2008/sp_080616_11-29-57-en.pdf)

<sup>456</sup> ENAR, wrap-up paper, fourth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

Our prime target are therefore the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), particularly as they play such an important role in the European economy, with some 23 million SMEs in Europe representing around 75 million jobs.<sup>457</sup>

Benoît van Grieken also emphasised that “intercultural diversity from top management levels creates a win-win situation for all groups involved”.<sup>458</sup> In his role as manager of a recruitment company, he said that sometimes employers would refuse to employ workers of different origins. In this situation, the matter would be reported to the Belgian employment ministry and it was up to the authorities to “decide on whether to take the company before a labour court”.<sup>459</sup> As an example van Grieken mentioned that 40% of workers in Belgium today come from other countries and his firm recruits approximately 30,000 workers a day, thus, implying that effective diversity management is crucial to the future of Europe.<sup>460</sup>

Chibo Onyeji challenged the effectiveness of ‘soft tools’, saying, despite “commendable efforts equality has not quite arrived in the workplace”.<sup>461</sup> He spoke in favour of stronger anti-discrimination measures, “If companies do not learn to respond to certain legal provisions, then there has to be sanctions.”<sup>462</sup> Onyeji “urged the commission to speed up efforts to win approval from all EU countries for an exhaustive – horizontal anti-discrimination directive” that would cover discrimination in all its forms, not just the least controversial aspects.<sup>463</sup> Onyeji also said, “workplace diversity is no longer just about anti-discrimination compliance. It focuses on social inclusion and the impact on minorities”.<sup>464</sup> Onyeji stressed:

Although EU anti-discrimination measures have lead to improved protection for ethnic minorities, social exclusion is on the increase, and distances between individuals and communities are wider than ever before. People of migrant and ethnic minority backgrounds lack intellectual confidence, professionals and academics with Masters and PhD qualifications are working as taxi drivers and cleaners.<sup>465</sup>

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<sup>457</sup> Commissioner Špidla speech, fourth Brussels Debate.

<sup>458</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/speeches/2008/sp\\_080616\\_11-29-57-en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/speeches/2008/sp_080616_11-29-57-en.pdf)

<sup>459</sup> News Archive, EU Observer. <http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu/457.0.html>

<sup>460</sup> Küchler, Teresa, “Dialogue not enough to prevent racism in the workplace,” EU Observer. <http://euobserver.com/879/26274?print=1>

<sup>461</sup> ENAR, wrap-up paper, fourth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>462</sup> Video of the fourth Brussels Debate. [www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu](http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu)

<sup>463</sup> Küchler, “Dialogue not enough to prevent racism in the workplace,”

<sup>464</sup> Küchler, “Dialogue not enough to prevent racism in the workplace,”

<sup>465</sup> Video of the fourth Brussels Debate. [www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu](http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu)

<sup>466</sup> ENAR, wrap-up paper, fourth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

Onyeji commented that while anti-discrimination laws alone could not effect change they were important for setting minimum acceptable standards. Kyriacos Triantaphyllides closed the debate by stressing that intercultural dialogue was vital in all areas of life because the major obstacle to achieving peace in any area of conflict was dialogue.<sup>466</sup>

### EU Debate Five.

#### **Multilingualism: A Bridge or a Barrier for Intercultural Dialogue?**

The four guest speakers in the fifth debate included: Leonard Orban, European Commissioner for Multilingualism; Claude Moraes, British Socialist MEP; Abram De Swaan, Emiritus Research Professor of Social Sciences at the University of Amsterdam and Sandra Pralong, Romanian National Ambassador of the Year and former UN Executive. The debate was organised by the European Commission and the European Union National Institute of Culture (EUNIC).<sup>467</sup>

The purpose of the debate was to discuss whether multilingualism was an obstacle or an aid to intercultural dialogue. Instead of the usual concept paper, EUNIC Brussels conducted a survey, prior to the EU debate, asking people how the knowledge of two or more languages impacts on integration in Europe.<sup>468</sup> While the majority of respondents agreed that knowledge of more than one language in the EU facilitates better communication, some believed that acceptance and integration is not solely about language. One respondent says that even when immigrants speak the official language of a country:

Integration, alas, is not simply a question of immigrants wanting and knowing how to integrate in their country of destination; it is also and most probably about how much the locals want and know how to integrate foreigners.<sup>469</sup>

Commissioner Orban opened the debate by stating “languages are one of the most effective tools for achieving intercultural dialogue” and therefore, “Europe’s

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<sup>466</sup> ENAR, wrap-up paper, fourth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>467</sup> EUNIC works to create effective partnerships between national institutions for culture both within and outside of the EU. Access [www.eunic-europe.eu](http://www.eunic-europe.eu) for further information.

<sup>468</sup> Survey results available via <http://www.eunic-brussels.eu>

<sup>469</sup> Irene Mangion. EUNIC Brussels Survey. [www.dialogue2008.eu](http://www.dialogue2008.eu)

abundance of mother tongues is a source of wealth”.<sup>470</sup> However, the Commissioner also recognised that linguistic diversity can be a barrier to communication, leading to misunderstandings between cultures and conflict. “Excessive assertion of identity” he said, “can lead to intolerance and fanaticism. Therefore, a sense of belonging based on accepting linguistic and cultural diversity is a powerful antidote to extremism” because language learning deepens the sense of kinship between EU citizens.<sup>471</sup> Then Commissioner Orban described the Commission’s new multilingualism strategy as an ambitious, comprehensive package to improve Europe’s social cohesion and prosperity.<sup>472</sup> One of the aims of the non-binding strategy would be for EU citizens to speak at least two foreign languages in addition to their mother tongue.<sup>473</sup> The Commissioner “was not convinced by the arguments of those who propose just one or two languages as the sole means of intercultural exchange. To do so would not only impoverish our society: it would contradict the very ethos of the European project. The variety of languages used in the EU is proof that our motto ‘unity in diversity’ is not just an empty phrase, but a tangible reality”.<sup>474</sup> Commissioner Orban emphasised that “multilingual people are precious assets for Europe that act as the glue between our different societies” and multilingualism is also crucial to the bloc’s economic prosperity, as the lack of language skills means the EU is losing out to other countries.<sup>475</sup>

Abram De Swaan saw multilingualism as a hindrance to integration, arguing that, “language diversity is not a treasure in itself, it is an obstacle”.<sup>476</sup> He criticised the EU’s tendency to promote noble aims that are difficult to achieve in practice, calling for two or three cross-border languages to be employed in the EU rather than all 23.<sup>477</sup> De Swaan said multilingualism “makes it very difficult for us to communicate, to have a shared public space in which the citizens of Europe can congregate and act

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<sup>470</sup> Commissioner Orban speech, fifth Brussels Debate. <http://www.europa-nu.nl/9353000/l/j9vvh6nf08temv0/vhy87na032z7>

<sup>471</sup> Commissioner Orban speech, fifth Brussels Debate. <http://www.europa-nu.nl/9353000/l/j9vvh6nf08temv0/vhy87na032z7>

<sup>472</sup> Commission Communication, ‘Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment’. COM (2008) 566 final, via [http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/pdf/com/2008\\_0566\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/pdf/com/2008_0566_en.pdf)

<sup>473</sup> News Archive, EU Observer. <http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu/457.0.html>

<sup>474</sup> Commissioner Orban speech, fifth Brussels Debate. <http://www.europa-nu.nl/9353000/l/j9vvh6nf08temv0/vhy87na032z7>

<sup>475</sup> EUNIC, wrap-up paper, fifth Brussels Debate. . [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>476</sup> News Archive, EU Observer. [www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu/457.0.html](http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu/457.0.html)

<sup>477</sup> EUNIC, wrap-up paper, fifth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

out European politics”.<sup>478</sup> He also believed that promoting a large number of languages only served to strengthen the dominance of English over and above native European languages.<sup>479</sup> He did, however, concede, “all politicians should have the right to speak their own language and all the bloc’s tongues should be publicly spoken by the top EU officials to raise awareness of Europe’s linguistic diversity.”<sup>480</sup>

Sandra Pralong stated that, “bilateral relations are the key to cherishing multilingualism” and thus, it was important for every European to ‘adopt’ another language as a second mother tongue.<sup>481</sup> This would enable all of the languages in the bloc to be covered, thus, eliminating the need for a common third language.<sup>482</sup>

Claude Moraes closed the debate by saying it was necessary to look at the bigger picture and “Understand that multilingualism is not about communicating in other languages. It is about confidence, respect. It’s about culture”.<sup>483</sup> He said multilingualism was a “strengthening process” and it was impossible to separate languages from history and culture and that language learning was intrinsically linked to a “wider economic and geopolitical perspective”.<sup>484</sup>

### EU Debate Six.

#### **Education: Ready for the Intercultural Challenge?**

The four guest speakers in the sixth debate included: Ján Figel’, European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth; Professor Jagdish Singh Gundara, UNESCO Chair in International Studies; Fred van Leeuwen, Secretary General of Educational International and Marianne Poncelet, Secretary General of the International Yehudi Menuhin Foundation. This debate was organised by the European Commission in co-operation with the European Youth Forum (YFJ), which wrote both the background and wrap-up papers for this event.<sup>485</sup>

<sup>478</sup> Video of the fifth Brussels Debate. [www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu](http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu)

<sup>479</sup> News Archive, EU Observer. [www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu/457.0.html](http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu/457.0.html)

<sup>480</sup> EUNIC, wrap-up paper, fifth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>481</sup> EUNIC, wrap-up paper, fifth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>482</sup> EUNIC, wrap-up paper, fifth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>483</sup> Video of the fifth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>484</sup> News Archive, fifth Brussels Debate. EU Observer.

<http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu/457.0.html>

<sup>485</sup> The European Youth Forum (YFJ) consists of 99 National Youth Councils and International Youth NGOs from across Europe. The YFJ works to empower young people to participate actively in society

Culture, education and intercultural dialogue are being widely discussed by civil society organisations at the grass roots level as well as at the institutional and political levels. The background paper noted that there were two ways of promoting intercultural dialogue through education because “promoting dialogue among cultures implies a reflection on the place occupied by cultural differences in this dialogue”.<sup>486</sup> One view advocated the protection of national and cultural identities and therefore believed education could be used as a tool to bridge differences between various cultural identities. The other view believed that cultural differences per se are not “necessarily the key element of intercultural dialogue, due to the increased level of globalisation” and the focus of education should be on promoting universal values like human rights and equality between all cultures.<sup>487</sup>

Ján Figel’ began the debate by highlighting “the importance of intercultural competences in the field of education and the need for formal and non-formal education in order to debate the challenges posed by intercultural dialogue”.<sup>488</sup> Ján Figel’ remarked that Europe still struggled to provide equal access to education for some migrant groups and that “Access to education and the quality of the education system are factors of cohesion, understanding and integration”.<sup>489</sup> Commissioner Figel’ remarked that it was important to promote diversity in schools and said that the mobility programmes, cross-border school and university course (Comenius, Erasmus) helped to promote “intercultural understanding, co-operation and respect”.<sup>490</sup> According to the Commissioner, “education unites” and “united we learn”.<sup>491</sup>

Professor Gundara emphasised “education has a major role to play in integrating identities”.<sup>492</sup> He continued, “Europe has a very long experience of dealing with issues of diversity and this process has led to the mutual recognition of other and their

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and improve their living conditions by representing their interests towards the European Institutions, the Council of Europe, the United Nations and other partners active in the youth field. For further information see [www.youthforum.org](http://www.youthforum.org)

<sup>486</sup> YFJ, background paper, sixth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue2008.eu](http://www.dialogue2008.eu)

<sup>487</sup> YFJ, background paper, sixth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue2008.eu](http://www.dialogue2008.eu)

<sup>488</sup> YFJ, wrap paper, sixth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue2008.eu](http://www.dialogue2008.eu)

<sup>489</sup> News Archive, sixth Brussels Debate. EU Observer.

<http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu.457.0.html>

<sup>490</sup> News Archive, sixth Brussels Debate. EU Observer.

<http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu.457.0.html>

<sup>491</sup> Video of the sixth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>492</sup> Video of the sixth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

‘otherness’ and this has become a distinguishing mark of a shared identity in this continent”.<sup>493</sup> In Europe today, he believed “developing teacher’s intercultural competencies and abilities to transfer European values is of central importance for building a cosmopolitan citizenship”.<sup>494</sup> Professor Gundara touched on the, “role of religion as an important component of culture, and the key role played by non-formal education in terms of developing key competences for intercultural dialogue”.<sup>495</sup> He also mentioned that it was necessary to educate youth in how to manage the “increasingly complex world of the media”.<sup>496</sup>

Marianne Pocelet emphasised the importance of interactive education, using the work of the Yehudi Menuhin Foundation as an example. The Foundation coordinates pan-European projects like the “iyouwe SHARE THE WORLD” project, which supports artistic workshops involving intercultural exchanges between primary school children.<sup>497</sup> Marianne Pocelet described the performances in which “Artists hold workshops for children, helping them to experience other cultures through storytelling, playing, singing and dancing” and she added, “It’s not just the children and artists who are working together and learning, but also the teachers and children’s parents”.<sup>498</sup>

Fred van Leeuwen stressed, “Quality education built upon values, universal values of understanding and tolerance, of respect for human rights and dignity, of seeing cultural differences as an opportunity rather than a threat....Separation and exclusion in education bring hatred and conflicts....The classroom will be the place where we start breeding tolerance”.<sup>499</sup> Mr van Leeuwen also raised concerns over a projected shortage of teachers saying, “We are facing a tremendous shortage of teachers and it

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<sup>493</sup> Video of the sixth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>494</sup> YFJ, wrap paper, sixth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue2008.eu](http://www.dialogue2008.eu)

<sup>495</sup> YFJ, wrap paper, sixth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue2008.eu](http://www.dialogue2008.eu)

<sup>496</sup> News Archive, sixth Brussels Debate. EU Observer.

<http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu.457.0.html>

<sup>497</sup> “iyouwe SHARE THE WORLD” proposed interactive workshops with children from seven EU states in order to recreate a common imaginary world through storytelling, art and music. For further information see <http://www.iyouwesharetheworld.eu>

<sup>498</sup> News Archive, sixth Brussels Debate. EU Observer.

<http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu.457.0.html>

<sup>499</sup> Video of the sixth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)



is very important that our governments start thinking about plans and strategies to recruit enough quality teachers for quality education where needed”.<sup>500</sup>

### *EU Debate Seven.*

#### **Talking Our Way Out of Trouble: How Media Debate Can Combat Intolerance**

The four guest speakers appearing at the seventh Brussels debate included: Viviane Reding, European Commissioner for Information Society and Media; Bettina Peters, Director of the Global Forum for Media Development; Forward Maisokwadzo, Exiled Journalists’ Network and Christa Prets, an Austrian Socialist MEP. The background and wrap papers were prepared by the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ).<sup>501</sup>

The background paper highlighted the increasing difficulty that journalists face in reporting sensitive issues because of the EU’s complex multicultural and political character. The paper noted that, “Journalists need to navigate with care around racism and extremism to avoid stirring up intolerance, while reporting fairly the mosaic of languages, religion, cultures and different historical perspectives that shape modern society”.<sup>502</sup> Unfortunately, while ‘sensationalism’ sells newspapers in an increasingly tighter market, it also fuels fears between communities. Thus, according to the paper, a co-ordinated approach including European and national policy makers is vital to promote intercultural dialogue and ethical reporting. In line with this, the paper acknowledged that a number of stakeholders in the media, have established guidelines aimed to combat racism, in order to promote accountability and the benefits of diversity.<sup>503</sup>

Chairperson, Shada Islam, agreed that, “journalism is now functioning in a much more challenging society” and “today’s competitive media environment is making our task as journalists even more difficult”.<sup>504</sup> Commissioner Reding emphasised Europe’s historical multicultural and multilingual dimension, saying, “this is our

<sup>500</sup> Video of the sixth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>501</sup> On the behest of the European Commission, a group of organisations including the International Federation of Journalists, the Media Diversity Institute and Internews Europe are presently conducting a survey on diversity in the European media, which can be accessed via [www.media4diversity.eu](http://www.media4diversity.eu).

<sup>502</sup> IFJ, background paper, seventh Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>503</sup> IFJ, background paper, seventh Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>504</sup> Video of the seventh Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)



biggest wealth and we are witnessing the possibilities of using new technologies in order to reach out to the world and spread this wealth of ours”.<sup>505</sup> Therefore, the role of “European and national policy makers is to support the exchange of production and access to knowledge”, she said.<sup>506</sup> She also commented that, “Media has been an intercultural dialogue tool from the very beginning, even before the internet era. New technologies are a great opportunity to seize. Due to interactive media, we can now overcome geographical and financial barriers”.<sup>507</sup> She said that because films can easily travel across borders, they contribute to the cultural enrichment of all people as they learn about their neighbours “culture, about their history, about their dreams”.<sup>508</sup>

Bettina Peters remarked, “There have, unfortunately, been many examples of how mainstream media in Europe fail to take up the challenge of fair and balanced reporting that provides readers, viewer and listeners with relevant information put into context”.<sup>509</sup> She provided examples of biased, discriminatory stories from the UK, Italy and Germany to show “how certain media adopt anti-immigration points of view, develop relationships with racist political parties or fail to report fairly about well-settled minorities”.<sup>510</sup> Bettina Peters raised the difficulty of ensuring freedom of the press while promoting good practice and noted that journalists themselves, along with public broadcasters and national Press Councils were working together to adopt “codes which challenge intolerance” through the “Ethical Journalism Initiative”(EJI).<sup>511</sup> She also emphasised that, “Good journalistic conduct requires...that government policies are challenged and politicians taken to task when they propagate intolerance, xenophobic and racist views”.<sup>512</sup> She finished by saying, “Active investment by EU institutions in promoting diversity in media, and supporting dialogue in the media industry and beyond go a long way towards strengthening media coverage that is diverse, pluralistic, fair and informed”.<sup>513</sup>

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<sup>505</sup> Video of the seventh Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>506</sup> IFJ, wrap paper, seventh Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>507</sup> News Archive, seventh Brussels Debate. <http://interculturaldialogue2008.eu/1600.0.html>

<sup>508</sup> Video of the seventh Brussels Debate. [www.dialogur.eu](http://www.dialogur.eu)

<sup>509</sup> Peters, Bettina, speech provided 03/12/08 by MEDIA CONSULTA via [www.media-consulta.com](http://www.media-consulta.com)

<sup>510</sup> IFJ, wrap paper, seventh Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>511</sup> Under the IFJ umbrella the EJI was launched in 2008. It advocates transparency and accountability through ethical journalism. See <http://www.ifj.org/en/pages/ifj-global-ethical-journalism-initiative-eji>

<sup>512</sup> Peters, Bettina, speech provided 03/12/08 by MEDIA CONSULTA via [www.media-consulta.com](http://www.media-consulta.com)

<sup>513</sup> Peters, Bettina, speech provided 03/12/08 by MEDIA CONSULTA via [www.media-consulta.com](http://www.media-consulta.com)

Forward Maisokwadzo questioned how the media could properly reflect diversity without a diverse staff, “When you talk of diversity you also have to look at the diversity of the newsroom itself and also look at the diversity of the content.”<sup>514</sup> He stressed that ethical journalism relied on public involvement saying, “The public also have a responsibility of telling their stories and challenging some of the inaccuracies. It is important not only to look at the role of media but also to look at how society is changing”.<sup>515</sup>

Christa Prets agreed with the call for public responsibility and emphasised the need for media education, “We need more competent media literacy at school [and]...we need educated teachers in media literacy” so that we are “able to sort out what is important for me, for myself, for my development and what is rubbish and what is manipulating me”.<sup>516</sup> The MEP commented that youth often consumed media without being equipped to distinguish good information from bad. In order to combat this, she had initiated a report on “media literacy in a digital world”, aimed at providing the necessary skills to safely use the internet. The panellists agreed that the media industry, policy makers and the public were jointly responsible for promoting intercultural dialogue and fighting discrimination.

### Thematic Analysis.

In the EU level debates the strongest consensus concerned a call for responsible political leadership to ensure economic and social provision for minorities, coupled with an emphasis on education. In all, seven themes emerged:

- 1) A disputation of the clash theory.
- 2) The EU needs immigrants.
- 3) Integration needs economic and social pre-conditions, which relies on responsible leadership at the local, national and supranational levels.
- 4) The importance of education.
- 5) The need for a separation between politics and religion.
- 6) The role of identities.
- 7) The role of the media.

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<sup>514</sup> Video of the seventh Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>515</sup> Video of the seventh Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>516</sup> Video of the seventh Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

**Table One: Anti-Clash**

Franco Frattini

Bashy Quraishy

Dr. Sajid

Kyriacos Triantaphyllides

**Table Two: Immigrants**

Bashy Quraishy

Leonard Orban

Vladimír Špidla

Benoît van Grieken

Viviane Reding

**Table Three: Pre-conditions**

Franco Frattini

Bashy Quraishy

Joris Rijbroek

Cem Özdemir

Jette Sandahl

Claire Gibault

Dr. Sajid

Vladimír Špidla

Chibo Onyeji

Leonard Orban

Abram De Swaan

Fred van Leeuwen

Viviane Reding

Bettina Peters

Forward Maisokwadzo

Christa Prets

<b>Table Four: Education.</b>
Franco Frattini
Bashy Quraishy
Joris Rijbroek
Cem Özdemir
Ján Figel'
Jette Sandahl
Nadine Larchy
Mario Mauro
Vladimír Špidla
Benoît van Grieken
Chibo Onyeji
Leonard Orban
Sandra Pralong
Professor Gundara
Fred van Leeuwen
Marianne Pocetlet
Christa Prets

<b>Table Five: Religion/Politics</b>
Franco Frattini
Bashy Quraishy
Joris Rijbroek
Cem Özdemir
Nadine Larchy

<b>Table Six: Identity</b>
Ahmet Polat
Jette Sandahl
Leonard Orban
Professor Gundara

<b>Table Seven: Media</b>
Professor Gundara
Viviane Reding
Bettina Peters
Forward Maisokwadzo
Christa Prets

During the EU debates, the guest-speakers repeatedly emphasized that intercultural dialogue is more than just communication. They argued that intercultural dialogue relies on economic and social pre-conditions, which require a commitment from political leaders at all levels, to provide access to employment and adequate housing, and to promote understanding through education and the media in order to dispel the fear of ‘difference’. The speakers argued, that in order to formulate effective policies for immigrants and minorities, not only do policy-makers need to understand the problems that minorities encounter on a daily basis, they also need an appreciation of these problems from a minorities’ perspective. They emphasized that intercultural dialogue can help to facilitate reciprocity and understanding and thus, function as a catalyst for change. The following section analyses the main themes that emerged from the debates and situates them within the current academic discourse explored in the preceding chapters.

### ANTI-CLASH.

While acknowledging the increasing diversity of Europe’s population and the resulting tensions, four of the guest speakers (14%) refuted the clash paradigm. This stance echoes that of many academics who strongly rejected Huntington’s ‘clash’ theory, arguing instead that conflict was more likely to occur within civilisations than between them.<sup>517</sup> Political and religious leaders concurred and advocated dialogue between cultures as a medium by which to facilitate “a paradigm shift away from cross-cultural misunderstandings” that inevitably lead to intolerance and conflict.<sup>518</sup> Commissioner Frattini dismissed the idea of an ongoing clash between cultures and emphasised the need for dialogue to eradicate the abuse of religion and culture. Bashy

<sup>517</sup> Fox, Jonathon, “Ethnic minorities and the clash of civilizations: A quantitative analysis of Huntington’s thesis,” *British Journal of Political Science* 32, no.(??), 429, Kepel, 8, Bhutto, 272.

<sup>518</sup> Accessed 20/07/08 via [http://www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/2006/webArticles/102006\\_Khatami.htm](http://www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/2006/webArticles/102006_Khatami.htm)

Quraishy stressed that minorities do not want to dominate the majority; they just want the opportunity to live peacefully and provide well for their families. In relation to Europe's Muslim population, scholars like Klausen, support this position, acknowledging that while historical tensions exist, "domestic conflicts have local causes", invariably linked to local socio-economic factors rather than cultural clashes.<sup>519</sup> Roy agrees, writing that there is a tendency to "overemphasise the role of Islam in problems pertaining to Muslim migrants" rather than examining the impact of Westernisation on migrant groups.<sup>520</sup> Roy also supports the anti-clash school in terms of Muslims in the EU by noting that terrorist acts in Europe are seldom linked to global jihads.<sup>521</sup>

Kyriacos Triantaphyllides stressed that dialogue was the key to promoting peace and preventing conflict. Tibi warns, however, that dialogue needs to be reciprocal since conflict is often generated within Europe's Muslim population because the West "defines the space of the debate" and any dialogue concerning Islam is reduced to a discourse on the meaning of the West.<sup>522</sup> This argument was reinforced by the conflict over the 'Cartoon Affair' in Denmark, which became a disagreement about the freedom of the western press rather than a debate about the religious rights on Muslims. Similarly, in France, the *hijab* debate became a conflict about the meaning of *laïcité* rather than the rights of Muslim women and girls to express their identity.<sup>523</sup> On this note, Quraishy emphasised the need for intercultural dialogue to be reciprocal rather than dominated by the majority because, he said, "minorities do not have the power" to orchestrate equal dialogue. Academic discourse also stresses the global dimension of dialogue with Islam in the EU since, as Camilleri writes, the way in which Europe handles dialogue with its Muslim population may affect the way Islam responds to "the challenge of modernity".<sup>524</sup> Emphasising the need to promote respect for all societies, Imam Sajid also disputed the clash theory by saying that the majority of wars were caused by greed, not religion.

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<sup>519</sup> Klausen, p.4. See also Heitmeyer, W et al, in Meyer, *Identity Mania*, 49.

<sup>520</sup> Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 26.

<sup>521</sup> Roy, *European Islam*, 54.

<sup>522</sup> Roy, *Globalised Ummah*, 336.

<sup>523</sup> Roy, *Globalised Ummah*, 337.

<sup>524</sup> Camilleri, 9. See also Kepel, 295, Klausen, 28, Bhutto, 19-20, Amghar et al, 6.

## IMMIGRANTS.

Although surveys show that some of Europe's aging population are resistant to ongoing immigration,<sup>525</sup> and politicians have often blamed immigrants for ethnic tensions,<sup>526</sup> the reality is that the EU has an increasing shortage of both skilled workers and labourers.<sup>527</sup> The EU needs immigrants to continue to grow economically and to support its aging workforce. Five of the guest speakers (17.5%) specifically mentioned the increasing value of immigrants to the EU. Quraishy reinforced the predictions that Europe will continue to need immigrants because of the 'dramatic falls in the European birth rate'. A report presented to the European Parliament by Gabriele Stauner (a German Christian Democrat) in November 2008, reinforced Quraishy's words by highlighting the projected increased pressure on the EU's healthcare system if Europe did not increase immigration.<sup>528</sup> Stauner stated that while there are presently four workers for every person over 65, by 2030, it was estimated that the ratio would be two to one. Benoît van Grieken, who told the audience that 40% of workers in Belgium today come from other countries, reinforced the fact that many EU states now rely heavily on immigrants. He stressed the need for companies to invest in diversity management policies in order to create a 'win-win situation' for both staff and business.

Eurobarometer polls confirm that many people in Europe today interact with different cultures on a daily basis and the speakers reinforced the idea that the EU has long been a multicultural society in which different cultures need to learn how to live and work together for the future good of Europe.<sup>529</sup> Commissioner Špidla emphasised that immigrants were more than a cheap source of labour because they also contributed to their host societies through their culture and lifestyle. Luca Visconti, a Professor at Bocconi University in Milan, agrees, saying in an interview that Italy's second-

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<sup>525</sup> (GMF02) Survey cited in Pettigrew, 37.

<sup>526</sup> EUMC, 7 July, 42.

<sup>527</sup> "The EU's labour-shortage 'time bomb'," Published 05/06/07. Updated 22/06/07.

<http://www.euractiv.com/en/social/europe/eu-labour-shortage-time-bomb/article-164262>

<sup>528</sup> "An aging Europe – MEPs call for social security reform,"

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/story\\_page/047-42861-322-11-47-908-20](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/story_page/047-42861-322-11-47-908-20)

<sup>529</sup> A 2007 Eurobarometer survey reported that 65% of EU residents interact with someone of a "different religion, ethnic background or nationality" on a weekly basis. *Intercultural Dialogue in Europe – Summary*, Flash Eurobarometer 217. The Gallop Organisation, December 2007

generation immigrants are “a critical resource in which to invest”.<sup>530</sup> Špidla also argued that immigrants should be valued for their diversity, not only as citizens, but also as consumers. The Commissioner stressed that companies, which embraced the realities of a multicultural workforce and consumer base, inevitably benefited economically as well as socially because they not only filled labour shortages thereby increasing their productivity but they also enlarged their customer base. Commissioner Orban also spoke about the richness of Europe’s multicultural society, emphasising the need to promote a sense of belonging through multilingualism in order to improve Europe’s social cohesion and prosperity. Commissioner Reding stressed that Europe’s cultural diversity is its ‘biggest wealth’ and this aspect of Europe should be nurtured. These speakers echoed the comments of academics like Bennett, Maalouf and Riftken (Chapter 3, p. 24) who argue that immigrants should be valued because they have the ability to straddle two or more cultures and can, if valued, strengthen the societies in which they live.

#### POLITICAL WILL.

Sixteen of the guest speakers (57%) concurred that meaningful dialogue cannot occur in a vacuum – it is dependent on the provision of equal opportunities, which in turn depend on political will. This stance reinforces academic discourse and reports from centres like the EUMC that state the integration of minorities relies on social and economic preconditions. While the speakers were talking about minorities in general, this is one of the major factors continually raised in relation to the integration of Muslims in the EU. A report, in 2006, on Islamophobia in the EU highlighted concerns regarding discrimination against Muslims in relation to “employment opportunities, education standards and social marginalisation”.<sup>531</sup> Pettigrew also argues that for integration to succeed, policy makers need to be proactive in the areas of employment, education and housing in order to facilitate opportunities for natural interaction.<sup>532</sup> Sandahl argued that ‘cultural democracy’ relied on equal access to economic and education resources for minority groups. Schnapper concurs, writing that integration relies on the democratic process, which ultimately stems from the political and social will of the host society. Integration, he writes, is “foremost a

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<sup>530</sup> Elizabette Povoledo, “Muslims seek to build future in Italy,” *International Herald Tribune: Europe*. Published 04/03/09. <http://www.ihf.com/articles/2009/03/04/europe/muslim.php>

<sup>531</sup> EUMC, *Islamophobia*,

<sup>532</sup> Pettigrew, 111.



value...in so far as it rests on the fundamentally democratic notion that...in spite of divergence of their beliefs...people...can live in harmony”.<sup>533</sup> In order to promote harmony, the third debate focussed specifically on the concept of ‘active citizenship’ as a means to bridge intercultural and interreligious divides. Active citizenship presupposes, however, that minorities have access to equal opportunities. Imam Sajid called for a harmonisation of EU laws in order to produce a “single equality” and fight discrimination. This echoes the literature examined in chapter two, which discusses the fact that although Article 13 of the EC Treaty established a basis for addressing discrimination, these resulting protective legal frameworks remain limited and do not cover key areas where Muslims (and other minorities) experience prejudice.<sup>534</sup> Additionally, these Directives are limited by the fact that they are left to the interpretation of member states and “positive action is discretionary rather than mandatory”.<sup>535</sup> Regulations, which are either jointly passed by the EU Council and the European Parliament, or solely by the Commission, become legally binding once passed, and national governments simply implement them on par with their current national laws.<sup>536</sup> Directives, on the other hand, are legislative acts of the EU, which require member states to achieve a particular aim. The way in which the member states achieve these aims is up to each member state and this accounts for tardiness by some states.

On this note, Chibo Onyeji commented that although the EU had passed anti-discrimination directives, equality had not arrived in the workplace and he urged the Commission to increase the powers of its anti-discrimination directives. Fred van Leeuwen stressed the responsibility of governments to facilitate integration through quality education built upon universal values and respect for human rights. Van Leeuwen stressed that the classroom was the place to start breeding tolerance, but this could not happen without a political commitment to recruit quality educators. In a similar vein, Bettina Peters advocated an active investment by EU institutions in promoting diversity in the media to prevent discriminatory press. These comments reinforce the writings of scholars who continue to argue for a concerted political response to recent conflicts, particularly those involving Europe’s Muslims:

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<sup>533</sup> Schnapper, 159-60.

<sup>534</sup> Choudhury, “Muslims and Discrimination,” in *European Islam*, 105.

<sup>535</sup> Choudhury, “Muslims and Discrimination,” in *European Islam*, 101.

<sup>536</sup> Accessed via [www.ec.europa.eu/community\\_law/introduction/what\\_regulation\\_en.htm](http://www.ec.europa.eu/community_law/introduction/what_regulation_en.htm)

Recourse to radical forms of political Islam, particularly by young people, is often the expression of a lack of political representation and participation by those who are excluded and socially and culturally discriminated against.<sup>537</sup>

## EDUCATION.

The importance of education was emphasised by seventeen speakers (60%). Ján Figel', who spoke at three of the debates constantly emphasised that education was the vital to the future of the EU politically, economically and socially. He remarked that "*politics grow from culture*". Thus, if the EU wanted to build a 'Europe of knowledge' (as set out in the Lisbon Treaty) it must first provide sufficient resources to build a strong cultural society. He reiterated that education policy must not only boost technological excellence but must also stimulate an emphasis on human values in order to build tomorrow's European citizens because access to education, and the quality of the education system, are the primary factors of cohesion, understanding and integration. The schoolroom is of course integral to the process of intercultural education, and the need to promote understanding and acceptance of cultural differences at an early age was strongly endorsed by the speakers, with Commissioner Frattini stating that children are the 'best ambassadors'. Sardar concurs, commenting that children are 'amalgamators', able to mix new and old cultures, able to add "bangers and mash and fish and chips to *sag gosht*, [casserole] and *parathas*, [bread] not noticing the joins" and, in turn, immigrant children help to educate their parents.<sup>538</sup> Nadine Larchy, said education was the 'key' to integration because if children could learn about other faiths and understand difference, they would also learn to respect different opinions and ideas.

The emphasis on the importance of education substantiates polls, which showed that younger, better educated people were more open and receptive to different minorities while those who held strong prejudices against migrants were older, more politically conservative and less well educated.<sup>539</sup> The 2006, British Sociological Association study revealed that some white, middle-class parents in Britain were choosing to enrol their children in multi-ethnic schools in order to better equip them to interact in

<sup>537</sup> Amel Boubekeur, "Political Islam in Europe," in *European Islam*, eds. Amghar and others, 36.

<sup>538</sup> Sardar, *Desperately Seeking*, 23.

<sup>539</sup> Pettigrew, 37.

an increasingly multicultural environment.<sup>540</sup> While the authors questioned the altruistic nature of the parents' intentions, arguing that their 'cosmopolitan multiculturalism' could be motivated by a desire to accrue 'cultural capital' rather than promote cultural equality, the end result was that the 'white' children were "seen to be developing key citizenship skills of tolerance and understanding difference that are increasingly vital in a society with growing class and ethnic intolerance".<sup>541</sup> The parents reported the ease with which their children could relate to those of different ethnicities compared to their own experience. Richard Harding, a barrister and parent said:

Sophie...is totally different to us, all our friends are white and middle –class, hers are from all sorts of class and ethnic backgrounds. And to be honest I'm quite uncomfortable with people from different backgrounds. I never had the experience at school or university...We want her [Sophie] to be a fully paid up citizen of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and I think she is and that is all down to the school. She has a real social confidence and can get on with anybody.<sup>542</sup>

In the debate, Fred van Leeuwen warned that, "separation and exclusion in education bring hatred and conflicts". For Muslim youth, education is a double-edged sword because of *madrasses*, where Muslim youth are often taught by foreign imams who do not speak the local European language and who have no understanding of European customs or western society. On this note, Ramadan argues that it is imperative for Western Europe to encourage the development of native-born, European educated imams who can teach an Islam that equips young Muslims with the means to live in the West.<sup>543</sup>

Chibo Onyeji challenged the audience to remember that there are two sides to the debate on education. He said that many well-educated immigrants often faced discrimination in terms of employment, resulting in professional and academic immigrants working as taxi drivers and cleaners. Discrimination in employment is substantiated by the findings of the Institut Montaigne, which reported that applicants with a 'traditional' French name were five times more likely to be interviewed than

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<sup>540</sup> Reay and others, "A Darker Shade of Pale?" 1043.

<sup>541</sup> Reay and others, "A Darker Shade of Pale?" 1052.

<sup>542</sup> Reay and others, "A Darker Shade of Pale?" 1045.

<sup>543</sup> Ramadan, *Western Muslims*, 127.

applicants with an Arab name even with identical CVs.<sup>544</sup> This was also supported by Benoît van Grieken who commented that sometimes employers would refuse to employ workers of different origins.<sup>545</sup>

On the positive side, Professor Gundara said Europe has a long history of dealing with diversity and already had a shared identity. He spoke of the need to continue to develop teacher's intercultural competencies and their abilities to transfer European values in order to build a cosmopolitan citizenship. According to Delanty, a cosmopolitan Europe is one that does not need an 'other' to construct identity against because it "does not have a clear distinction between east and west or between Self and Other".<sup>546</sup> To be European in a cosmopolitan sense, he argues, is to simply acknowledge that today "one lives in a world that does not belong to a specific people".<sup>547</sup> One of the keys to unity in diversity is the understanding of other languages and, thus, Commissioner Orban described the Commission's new multilingualism strategy as an ambitious, comprehensive package to improve Europe's social cohesion and prosperity. Joris Rijkbroek commented on the importance of cultural education for all ages through a variety of mediums, telling the audience about the projects underway in Amsterdam, which were set up in direct response to lessen the violent backlash against the Muslim community that occurred after the killing of Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh in 2004.

### SEPARATION BETWEEN POLITICS AND RELIGION.

The need for a separation between politics and religion was stressed by five of the speakers (17.5%). All four speakers in the first debate agreed that although intercultural dialogue is essential to help integrate migrants, it should not be confused with inter-religious dialogue because most minorities do not want religious domination. They just want equal access to housing, employment and education. Nadine Larchy remarked that politicians often mixed politics and religion, which confused the issues. Cem Özdemir concluded the first debate by reiterating that integration policy should focus on the separation between politics and religion. He

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<sup>544</sup> LeGrain, 265.

<sup>545</sup> Küchler, "Dialogue not enough to prevent racism in the workplace," <http://euobserver.com/879/26274?print=1>

<sup>546</sup> Delanty, Gerard, *Rethinking Europe: Social Theory and the implications of Europeanisation* (London: Routledge, 2005), 191.

<sup>547</sup> Delanty, 77.

stressed that young immigrants wanted to be able to interact with those in their host countries without always having to be concerned about ethnic or religious issues. As Klausen reports, “Muslims are always explaining who they are *not* and never have a chance to say who they *are*”.<sup>548</sup> Fetzer and Soper endorse the need for a separation between politics and religion, because as they argue, the UK presently privileges the Church of England over other faiths. By not recognising the faith of Islam on par with the Church of England, they say, the state does not protect the “distinctive religious identity” of Muslims.<sup>549</sup>

For Muslims, separating the secular and religious spheres means separating Islam as a culture from Islam as a religion, and conferring the same rights and privileges on Islam as other religions enjoy. Roy and Tibi argue that Islam is both a culture and a religion, and that confusing the two exacerbates the failure of integration in Europe. Rather than pushing for an ethno-cultural identity, the majority of European Muslims simply want recognition for Islam, in the same way other religions are recognised (especially Christianity), and to be allowed to practice their faith without being stigmatised. According to Roy, the recognition by the state of Islam as a ‘mere’ religion, on par with other religions would prevent the politicalisation of Islam, thus isolating extremists and preventing them from “building a political constituency”.<sup>550</sup>

## IDENTITY.

Speakers agreed that the recognition of different cultural identities is pivotal to the success of integration and the promotion of ‘unity in diversity’. The increasing interaction on a daily basis of varied cultures, all with a legitimate claim to European soil, means that minority cultures are continuously challenging majority cultures for the equal recognition. Four of the guest speakers (14%) stressed the importance of recognising that identities are multiple, fluid and equally valid. This is reflected in academic discourse, which posits that identities are constructed and ever changing, being shaped in the crucible of experience where “identities can be adapted and discarded like a change of costume”.<sup>551</sup> Jette Sandahl emphasised that the need to see, understand and empathise with the viewpoint of the ‘other’ is a core issue for

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<sup>548</sup> Klausen, 85.

<sup>549</sup> Fetzer & Soper, 31.

<sup>550</sup> Roy, *European Islam*, 60.

<sup>551</sup> Lasch, *The Minimal Self*, 34 and 38 respectively.

contemporary societies because “different ways of life carry their own qualities”. As Strath writes, immigrant identities are even more complex and the immigrant can find themselves in ‘double danger’ of either “falling in between two cultures...[or] falling into the abysses of modernity” forever without a ‘home’.<sup>552</sup> Commissioner Orban warned that a sense of belonging based on accepting cultural diverse identities can be a powerful antidote to extremism. Academic literature suggests that it is the marginalisation and exclusion of Europe’s Muslims that leads to conflict rather than inherent cultural differences.<sup>553</sup> Ramadan, Roy and Tibi all stress that it is imperative for young Muslims to feel that they belong because marginalisation pushes them towards an ‘imagined community’, a politicized Islam, a “defensive-cultural phenomenon” directed against the West.<sup>554</sup> Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Commonwealth, told the European Parliament in November 2008 that recognition of the Europe’s Muslims is vital to combating extremism:

The condition for being able to talk to somebody is that they recognise your right to speak, that you are a partner in dialogue. Someone who negates my very existence, or my identity, or my right to have rights, cannot be a partner in dialogue. So the issue is not how do we talk to the extremists, the issue is how do we talk to the moderates so that we can isolate the extremists.<sup>555</sup>

In this vein, Polat Ahmet commented on the importance of understanding different cultures in order to fully appreciate the ‘others’ experience. He said that artists had the ability to build bridges between cultures by challenging people’s awareness of diverse identities. Commissioner Figel’ stated that socio-cultural cohesion ultimately underpinned the political and economic success of the EU.

### MEDIA.

The role of the media in the EU has often been a contentious issue, especially when freedom of speech is invoked as a justification for reporting on inflammatory issues. As a young Muslim teacher in Aubervilles remarked, “Whenever Islam is mentioned

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<sup>552</sup> Strath, “A European Identity: To the Historical Limits of a Concept,” 399.

<sup>553</sup> Meyer, *Identity Mania*, 50.

<sup>554</sup> Tibi, *Between Culture*, 189.

<sup>555</sup> ‘Jonathan Sacks: “Make heroes of the moderates”’.

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/story\\_page/037-42129-322-11-47-906-20](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/story_page/037-42129-322-11-47-906-20)

on television or in newspapers, it is always about terrorist attacks”.<sup>556</sup> Five of the speakers (17.5%) focussed on the importance of the media in regards to accommodating diverse cultures. Bettina Peters raised the difficulty of ensuring freedom of the press while promoting good practice and she shared examples of discriminatory reporting in several EU states. She argued that the media, at times, is guilty of fuelling conflict as evidenced by the 2006 ‘cartoon affair’ in Denmark. Parekh notes that, the publication of the cartoons contrasted with a decision three years earlier by the editor of the Jyllands-Posten, who declined to publish cartoons about Jesus because they could be offensive to Christians.<sup>557</sup>

Forward Maisokwadzo said the media industry should employ a multicultural staff, in order to reflect the multicultural dimension of the EU. Similarly, the 2004 CBMI report also stressed the need for newspapers and other media to employ Muslim journalists to ensure balanced reporting.<sup>558</sup> Maisokwadzo also pointed out that the public has a role to play in the promotion of ethical journalism by demanding accurate reporting. Christa Prets agreed with the need for public responsibility, coupled with a greater emphasis on media education at schools so that young people could learn to distinguish between good and bad information especially on the internet. Again, the CBMI report highlights the dangers of the web, writing that “virtual anarchy reigns in cyberspace” because websites are not subject to the same laws of libel.<sup>559</sup> The report details the case of the *Evening Standard*, which was reported to the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) in 2002 by Ken Livingstone, the Mayor of London, for allowing racist comments on its website *This is London*. The comments posted on the website were in reaction to the Bali bombings and included remarks like, “Hands up who would like to see...the rounding up of Muslims” and “Every mosque a potential terrorist HQ”.<sup>560</sup> In order to combat this kind of influence Ms Prets spoke about her report on “media literacy in a digital world”, which was aimed at providing the necessary skills to safely use the internet.

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<sup>556</sup> BBC News, Sara. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/4376500.stm>

<sup>557</sup> Parekh, *Identity*, 112.

<sup>558</sup> CBMI, 71.

<sup>559</sup> CBMI, 70.

<sup>560</sup> CBMI, 70.

Modern communications, transnational mobility, trade and international relations coupled with environmental and security concerns have reduced the world to a global community, increasingly reliant on the dialogic process. Within the EU, the need for open channels of communication becomes increasingly urgent as continuing immigration flows contribute to cultural, political and religious plurality. The debates in Brussels provided an opportunity to discuss some of the challenges facing the EU in an increasingly multicultural world and the concerns raised by the speakers echoed the discourse analysed in the preceding chapters. Both strands emphasise that integration and intercultural dialogue is about reciprocity - about understanding the others' point of view in order to expose social and economic differences and create a level playing ground.

Guest speakers raised many of the same concerns that academics, scholars and stakeholders have been raising during the past two decades:

- the need to promote peaceful dialogue as a means to prevent conflict,
- the EU's future is reliant on immigrants,
- successful integration relies on social and economic pre-conditions and political leaders must act responsibly to ensure these are met,
- the importance of education to equip future generations to live harmoniously in a multicultural Europe,
- the need to accept Islam as a European religion,
- the equality of identities,
- the power of the media to ignite prejudice or mediate reconciliation.

Ultimately, for Muslims and other minorities in Europe, intercultural dialogue is about action - on the street and in civic, national and supra-national institutions. The following chapter looks at the recommendations from the debates, situating these within academic discourse. It also looks at some emerging 'intercultural trends' at the grassroots and the response of civil society, and the EU institutions to the Year of Intercultural Dialogue.



## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **WHISPERS OF CHANGE?**

“In a world which has become a small village we may benefit from all cultures and gather them together in one civilisation for the good of all...but at the same time one must defend one’s own identity so as to protect the beauty of the world”. Ahmad Badr al-din Hassoun.<sup>561</sup>

#### *Introduction.*

One of the main objectives of EYID was to promote intercultural dialogue as a medium for peaceful coexistence and to provide an opportunity for member states and citizens to explore the therapeutic qualities of the dialogic process. Over 524 national events and 406 projects raised the awareness of intercultural dialogue and mobilised stakeholders, policy makers and grassroots civil society organisations throughout the EU.<sup>562</sup> Its aim was to facilitate a better understanding of Europe’s complex multi-cultural environment by moving beyond ‘mere tolerance’ towards a celebration of Europe’s diversity. Will ‘intercultural coffee’ or ‘intercultural art’ under the carapace of intercultural dialogue make any difference to those who struggle with diversity? Only, according to guest speakers and scholars, if it enables a public recognition of the value assigned to the different cultural identities that contribute to a multicultural society.<sup>563</sup> Parekh argues, that societies value identities relative to their positions of importance within “the prevailing structure of power and any revaluation entails corresponding changes” within those power structures.<sup>564</sup> As Bashy Quraishy argued in the first Brussels debate, however, only the majority power structures in societies have the means to orchestrate change because, “Minorities do not have the power to ask for a dialogue based on mutual understanding. The majority has the key to the front door, not the minority”.<sup>565</sup> This is especially true in relation to Europe’s Muslim population, for although there are approximately 15 million Muslims in the EU there

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<sup>561</sup> Ahmad Badr al-din Hassoun, Grand Mufti of Syria, speaking to the European Parliament in Strasbourg at the first plenary session on 15 January 2008 to mark the beginning of the year of intercultural dialogue. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+IM-PRESS+2>

<sup>562</sup> [www.dialogue2008.eu](http://www.dialogue2008.eu)

<sup>563</sup> Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism*, 3.

<sup>564</sup> Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism*, 2.

<sup>565</sup> Küchler, “Frattini promotes intercultural dialogue,” <http://euobserver.com/879/25789>

are fewer than 30 Muslim representatives in national governments across the member states.<sup>566</sup> Thus, within the EU it is the majority power structures - supranational, national and local - that orchestrate the socio-economic and psychological environment within which immigrants are ascribed value and it is the majority population that then accepts or rejects these ‘valued immigrants’.

This was reinforced by the guest speakers at the EU debates in Brussels, who cited the importance of education and the need for responsible leadership to address socio-economic disparities as the most influential factors in relation to valuing immigrants and for promoting successful integration. Since this thesis is concerned with the dialogue between Islam and contemporary Europe, this chapter looks at the concerns and recommendations that emerged from the EU debates and specifically situates these within the wider body of academic discourse that has consistently advocated similar solutions for the integration of Europe’s Muslims. It also looks at the commitment of the EU institutions to promoting a multicultural Europe and some emerging grassroots trends amongst young Muslims. It then suggests areas for further research in a discourse that remains significant to Europe’s future.

### Concerns and Recommendations.

Socio-economic pre-conditions (reliant on political will) and education emerged from the EU debates as the two most important factors in relation to the successful integration of migrants in Europe. These two themes are especially relevant in relation to Europe’s Muslim population and this chapter argues that these two concerns ultimately underpin all of the other themes. In 2006, a Pew Poll conducted in Germany, Great Britain, France and Spain reported that the major worry for Muslims in these four countries was unemployment rather than religious or cultural concerns.<sup>567</sup> Employment - the ability to house, feed and clothe one’s family - and access to education, enable migrants to become upwardly mobile and to fully participate in citizenship. The first step from intercultural challenges to interculturalism, according to The Rainbow Paper, is to “stop identifying conflicts in our interactions with “others” as foremost culturally and ethnically motivated when

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<sup>566</sup> Klausen, 20.

<sup>567</sup> Pew Global Attitudes Project, 2. [www.http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=254](http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=254)

they are often actually rooted in socio-economic and political inequalities”.<sup>568</sup> Academics like Klausen, Roy, Pettigrew, Schnapper and Boubekur (quoted in Chapter 5, pp. 128-131), along with the EUMC (Ch. 5, p.130) and Brussels’ speakers, like Quraishy and Sandahl, agree that ‘cultural democracy’ relies on equal access to economic and educational resources for minority groups. As Bhutto writes in relation to life in Pakistan, “Huge economic disparities between social classes in a society strain national unity”.<sup>569</sup> This is also true in the EU where high unemployment sparked violent clashes involving Muslim youth in the *banlieues* in France in 2005. As Wharton writes:

One can also state that prevailing economic conditions command a powerful influence over the respective fortunes of Muslim communities in Western Europe and thus closely affect both the reaction of the host society towards Muslim communities and the corresponding response of the Muslim communities. This factor has been seen to be at work during times of economic recession and unemployment in Western Europe when the non-indigenous nature of respective Muslim communities and their perceived “intrusionary” status was found to have been emphasized and exaggerated in a negative fashion.<sup>570</sup>

The concern for the EU in this present time of economic uncertainty is whether Muslim immigrants will once again find themselves marginalised as they were in the recession during the 1970’s. Already media reports are signifying that the economic slump will exacerbate social problems amongst the “poor and those descendent from immigrants, especially the Muslim community”.<sup>571</sup> In his role as manager of a recruitment company, Benoît van Grieken commented that sometimes employers would refuse to employ workers of different origins and to address this, Onyeji “urged the commission to speed up efforts to win approval from all EU countries for an exhaustive – horizontal anti-discrimination directive” that would cover discrimination in all its forms.<sup>572</sup> Imam Sajid also called for the harmonisation of EU laws in order to “produce a “single equality” and fight discrimination...and bring about change through active citizenship”<sup>573</sup> and Commissioner Špidla said the EU

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<sup>568</sup> Rainbow Paper, 5.

<sup>569</sup> Bhutto, 284.

<sup>570</sup> Barrie Wharton, “From London to Lisbon: Perspectives on the future role of Muslims in 21<sup>st</sup> century Europe,” 13. [www.mel-net.ics.ul.pt/pdf/BarrieWharton.pdf](http://www.mel-net.ics.ul.pt/pdf/BarrieWharton.pdf)

<sup>571</sup> Sean O’Grady, “Europe is united at last: by recession,” *The Independent Business*, 10 January 2009. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/analysis-and-features/europe-is-united-at-last-by-recession-1297822.html>

<sup>572</sup> Küchler, “Dialogue not enough to prevent racism,” <http://euobserver.com/879/26274?print=1>

<sup>573</sup> EPC, wrap-up paper, third Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

needed to legislate in order to “guarantee effective enforcement mechanisms and dissuasive sanctions, accompanied by positive action measures”.<sup>574</sup> Imane Karich endorses these comments, arguing for proactive policies to ensure that Muslims are not disadvantaged by their religion in the labour market and argues that the EU could introduce “targets for the minimum level of ethnic and religious diversity, starting with the public services”.<sup>575</sup> These recommendations echo the proposals of academics like Choudhury<sup>576</sup> and the EUMC 2006 report on Islamophobia which advises that:

Member States need to develop, reinforce and evaluate policies aimed at delivering equality and non-discrimination for Muslim communities, particularly in the fields of employment, education, and access to goods and services.<sup>577</sup>

Education is on a par with socio-economic pre-conditions and is also pivotal to integration because education not only creates opportunity but as polls in the EU suggest, those who are better educated also tend to be more accepting of different ethnicities and less given to prejudice (Pettigrew, Ch. 3, p. 77). While first generation immigrants are often resigned to the difficulties of settling in a foreign land they believe that life will be easier for their children as they become educated through the host societies’ institutions. For Muslim immigrants in Europe in the 1970’s, however:

The second shock came when the children of these migrants, whom their parents had hoped would become well educated and well integrated in the job markets, were unable to achieve social promotion. Many of them ended up having no qualifications and therefore were either in low level jobs or unemployed. In this precarious situation, for some Muslims religion has become a way to regain the recognition which could not be obtained through professional merits.<sup>578</sup>

It is exactly this type of marginalisation that can be remedied by ensuring equal access to education with teachers who are trained to deal with diversity. Hence, Mr van Leeuwen’s call for more teachers able to promote tolerance and the value of diverse cultures in the classroom. As the guest speakers and Sardar argue, children are the best ambassadors and are able to more easily straddle two worlds. The role of

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<sup>574</sup> ENAR, wrap-up paper, fourth Brussels Debate. [www.dialogue.eu](http://www.dialogue.eu)

<sup>575</sup> Imane Karich, “Economic Development of Muslim Communities,” in *European Islam*, 74.

<sup>576</sup> Choudhury, “Muslim and Discrimination,” *European Islam*, 77-106.

<sup>577</sup> EUMC *Islamophobia*, 108.

<sup>578</sup> Professor Dr. Ural Manço, at a conference entitled “Intercultural dialogue: response to which problems? Christian and Muslim perspectives”, 17 April, 2008. [www.cec-kek.org/content/Projectislam.shtml](http://www.cec-kek.org/content/Projectislam.shtml)

schools and educators, therefore, are crucial especially as “many migrant families belong to socially-disadvantaged groups where parents have little capacity to promote” the integration process.<sup>579</sup> Again, Bhutto’s words regarding education for young Muslim children in Pakistan are equally applicable to young Muslim children in Europe, “The first key is to build an educational system that allows children to rise to a higher social and economic status than their parents.”<sup>580</sup> Education is also key for ‘native European’ children who need to learn to value other cultures and understand that different ways of life are equally valid. In the European Parliament, the EP Vice-President Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou stated that “Education can teach respect and the acceptance of pluralism and diversity in the context of religion and beliefs”.<sup>581</sup> Thus, education can foster Bennett’s ‘virtual insidership’ and Maalouf’s ‘reciprocity’ and help to avoid Castells’ ‘resistance identities’ (Ch. 3, p.76, p. 76 & p. 67 respectively). Ramadan, Roy and Tibi also warned in previous chapters that it is important for Muslim youth to feel a sense of belonging in their host societies and this ‘sense’ often begins in schools.

For Muslim youth education is a double-edged sword because of the involvement of foreign imams and foreign governments. For this reason, guest speakers, academics and imams continue to point out the need for Europe to know what is being taught in Islamic schools on European soil. They stress the urgent need for locally trained imams, and for European mosques to be locally funded to ensure that mosques “remain primarily places of worship and not places of political influence for foreign national agendas and extremist ideologies”.<sup>582</sup> Godard concurs and writes that the “Supervision of youngsters and the creation of training centres for imams, teachers on religion or chaplains appear to be urgent. Delays over the control of teaching materials used in *koranic* schools are dangerous. Muslim religious education has to be

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<sup>579</sup> Dominican Father Berten, at a conference entitled “Intercultural dialogue: response to which problems? Christian and Muslim perspectives”, hosted by the European Parliament, 17 April 2008. [www.cec-kek.org/content/Projectislam.shtml](http://www.cec-kek.org/content/Projectislam.shtml)

<sup>580</sup> Bhutto, 285.

<sup>581</sup> Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou, EP Vice-President, 18 June, 2008. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/plenary/cre/sidesSearch.do>

<sup>582</sup> Yahya, Sergio Pallavicini, Vice-President of the Islamic Religious Community in Italy at a conference entitled “Visibility of religion in the European public space: the question of worship places and religious symbols in clothing,” hosted by the European Parliament, 29 May 2008. [www.cec-kek.org/content/Projectislam.shtml](http://www.cec-kek.org/content/Projectislam.shtml)

considered as the first challenge”.<sup>583</sup> Not only are Muslim youth taught by foreign imams in Europe but some second and third generation Muslim youth also return to their families’ country of origin for Islamic studies. While other immigrants in Europe generally integrate over time through the immersion of succeeding generations in the local culture, a study commissioned by the European Parliament’s Committee on Culture and Education, (May 2007), noted that although subsequent generations of Muslim are born and educated in Europe they often “study Islamic sciences in Muslim countries since there was no place to carry out those studies in Europe”.<sup>584</sup> The report warned that Islam in Europe is not only imported through foreign imams, but it is actually “carried forward by actors who were born in European territory” and this hampers the emergence of “an intellectual elite, capable of its own autonomous, original intellectual production”.<sup>585</sup> As Roy argues, it is imperative to sever these links so that Islam is no longer “managed through the help of foreign governments or institutions, which have no interest in delinking Muslims in the West with their countries”.<sup>586</sup> The urgent need for locally trained imams is endorsed by moderate Dutch Muslims like Hikmat Mahawat Khan who says that before Muslim leaders can demand change in Europe, they need to take certain steps to show that they are changing. As well as recruiting locally-trained imams, Khan says, it is important that mosques and Islamic organisations are more open and outward-looking and more involved in their communities and that Islamic schools should be open to all.<sup>587</sup>

These recommendations to ensure equal opportunities in education for Muslim children and to press for transparency in Islamic schools and mosques feeds into the need for a separation between church and state in order to further facilitate the integration of Europe’s Muslims. An American journalist notes:

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<sup>583</sup> Godard, *European Islam*, 203.

<sup>584</sup> European Parliament Study, “Islam in the European Union: What’s at Stake in the Future,” v. [http://www.libertysecurity.org/IMG/pdf/Islam\\_in\\_Europe\\_EN.pdf](http://www.libertysecurity.org/IMG/pdf/Islam_in_Europe_EN.pdf)

<sup>585</sup> European Parliament Study, vi.

<sup>586</sup> Roy, *European Islam*, 60.

<sup>587</sup> Le Grain, 312-314.

Three generations after West Indians began immigrating en masse to the United Kingdom, Caribbean-descended Britons still doubt that their children or grandchildren will ever be seen as fully British. Turkish guest workers are still, two generations later, not seen as fully German. And the unrest of the children and grandchildren of Algerian, West African and Moroccan immigrants in the French suburbs attest to France's failure to assimilate its immigrant population, despite the republic's official egalitarian rhetoric... As long as there is a Church of England, if you are Jewish or Muslim or Sikh, there is a subtle level at which you will simply not feel fully English.<sup>588</sup>

Refusing to acknowledge Islam on par with Christianity as a 'mere religion' (as Roy advocates) is a stumbling block for those Muslims like Klausen's elites (Ch. 4, p. 102) who are seeking to politically participate in Europe's future.

In Westminster, the European Parliament, the Bundestag, and in regional and municipal councils throughout Western Europe, the democratic political system that emerged from the European Enlightenment is starting to absorb men and women born in a Muslim tradition, for the first time in history. A promising generation of young Muslims now have opportunities to exercise democratic rights... Their political participation has its roots in local organizations, where many of these entrepreneurs, activists, professionals, and civil servants got their start. Such grassroots political activity requires a separation of mosque and state, as Islam settles into the European milieu. This separation of the secular and religious domains is the prerequisite for liberating the forces of reform in the Muslim world.<sup>589</sup>

As previously stated Islam in Europe is not homogenous, it is as diverse as the believers' countries of origin. Yet, as Ulrich Schwerin comments "when Europe fails in its task to integrate Muslim immigrants, religion gives them a common identity".<sup>590</sup> An identity that all too often is portrayed in negative terms, which serves to further entrench the 'them and us' mentality on both sides. To defuse this thinking Roy argues that Europe needs to encourage the emergence of a European Islam, which will help integrate European Muslims by providing a Western-compatible religious identity while weakening links with foreign countries at the same time.<sup>591</sup> He says the "challenge is not to go at the roots of terrorism... The challenge is to prevent the radical fringe from finding a broad political base among the local Muslim population".<sup>592</sup> Accepting Islam as a religion on par with other European religions

<sup>588</sup> Naomi Wolf, "US embraces migrants" in *The Christchurch Press*, 14 January, 2009, A15.

<sup>589</sup> Kepel, 294-5.

<sup>590</sup> Ulrich Schwerin, *The European Magazine*, 16/01/04.

<http://www.cafebabel.com/eng/article/12906/euro-islam-culturalphenomenon.html>

<sup>591</sup> Roy, "Europe's Response to Radical Islam," in *Current History* 104, no.685 (2005), 364.

<sup>592</sup> Roy, *Current History*, 363.



would prevent the radicalisation of Islam and allow for dialogue on an equal basis. Boubeker writes, “Recourse to radical forms of political Islam, particularly by young people, is often the expression of a lack of political representation and participation by those who are excluded and socially and culturally discriminated against”.<sup>593</sup>

Ironically, a Gallup World poll found that “London Muslims generally agree with the British public about what it takes for minorities to integrate into society. Majorities of both groups agree mastering the national language, getting a better education, finding a job, participating in politics, volunteering to serve the public and celebrating national holidays are necessary for successful integration”.<sup>594</sup> This report shows that Muslims generally want to integrate but one barrier to integration, according to the guest speakers and academics, is the lack of recognition of the important contribution that Islam and Europe’s Muslims make in terms of historically and culturally enriching the European story and their value as consumers and contributors to Europe’s future. The Rainbow Paper endorses this, arguing that, ethical and cultural issues aside, it is important to value immigrants for the contribution they make to their national economies and to recognize their value as consumers, alongside the cost on non-integration of migrants and minorities in terms of social welfare, safety and policing costs.<sup>595</sup>

The struggle to be recognised and valued as European citizens is further hampered by media reports, which all too often portray Islam in a threatening light by reporting the negative and omitting the positive. In terms of integration, media have a double responsibility. On the one hand, they have the ability to influence the concerns of public opinion by determining the agenda and, on the other hand, they contribute towards creating a perception of reality by swaying public opinion. The guest speakers called for discernment from the public to question and challenge news stories and for journalists to self-monitor their work and to promote ethical journalism. As Rigoni writes: “Any policy, any action in the field of integration and the fight against discrimination must therefore include the media...and in particular ethnic media...[who] are one of the key groups of actors influencing the integration

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<sup>593</sup> Boubeker, *European Islam*, 36.

<sup>594</sup> “Beyond Multiculturalism,” Gallup World Poll, 2007.

<sup>595</sup> The Rainbow Paper, “Intercultural Dialogue: From Practice to Policy and Back,” 5.  
[www.http://rainbowpaper.labforculture.org/signup/public/read](http://rainbowpaper.labforculture.org/signup/public/read)



of minority or marginalised people and groups, and thus of their acceptance as belonging to society”.<sup>596</sup>

Hence, equal opportunities to employment and education; recognising Islam as a European religion; valuing Muslim immigrants and recognising their right to express their different identities; and the accurate portrayal of Muslims in the media are the keys to facilitating peaceful integration, according to academics and the Brussels speakers. These are not new ideas but to date progress in fostering a ‘social Europe’ has been hampered by an emphasis on an ‘economic Europe’. At the beginning of EYID Bashy Quraishy, criticised the European Commission, arguing that it should have allocated half of the EYID budget to Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) who “interact with the very people they want to create a dialogue with”.<sup>597</sup> He cautioned:

My biggest concern is that this kind of year, like last year which was the year of ‘equal opportunities’, becomes a symbolic gesture; talking and exchanging smiles and pleasant words<sup>598</sup>.

Considering, that the EU is often criticised for its loquacious rhetoric and sesquipedalianism, Quraishy raised valid concerns that a majority monologue was in danger of reducing intercultural dialogue to a meaningless exercise. However, just as there is evidence of a sea-change at the grassroots level, there is also evidence of a renewed interest within the EU institutions and national governments in intercultural dialogue in order to breathe life into the EU’s motto ‘unity in diversity’.

### *Political Action.*

Although the EU does not have any competencies to act in the field of religion and this dimension is seldom present at the level of Community policies, the current EU leadership was active in the promotion of events within the framework of EYID. The European Commission and the European Policy Centre jointly organised the Brussels debates and the European Commission organised a conference entitled ‘Intercultural Dialogue: a challenge for faith and convictions’ (November 2008). During the year the European Parliament invited several distinguished personalities to address the

<sup>596</sup> Isabelle Rigoni, “Access to Media for European Muslims,” in *European Islam*, 123.

<sup>597</sup> Kücher, EU Observer, “Anti-racism NGOs,” (31/03/08). <http://euobserver.com/879/25865>

<sup>598</sup> Kücher, “Anti-racism NGOs”.

plenary on various religious perspectives, and also hosted four seminars specifically focussing on ‘Islam, Christianity and Europe’.<sup>599</sup> In response to calls for a stronger stance from the EU in relation to discrimination the European Council adopted the ‘Council Framework Decision on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law’ on 28 November, 2008.<sup>600</sup> In the Framework Decision the Council states:

(5) Racism and xenophobia constitute a threat against groups of persons which are the target of such behaviour. It is necessary to define a common-criminal law approach in the European Union to this phenomenon in order to ensure that the same behaviour constitutes an offence in all Member States and that effective, proportionate and dissuasive penalties are provided for natural and legal persons having committed or being liable for such offences.

The FRA welcomed this as an important step forward, coming seven years after its initial presentation by the European Commission in 2001, saying that it is “an important tool for the EU-wide condemnation of racist and xenophobic crime”.<sup>601</sup> At this point in time, however, full harmonisation of laws in this area is still constrained by the fact that:

(6) Since Member States’ cultural and legal traditions are, to some extent, different, particularly in this field, full harmonisation of criminal laws is currently not possible.

Again, although migrant integration policy remains primarily the competence of Member States, the EU institutions have been gradually constructing a common framework since the Tampere Council in 1999. In 2007, the European Parliament and the European Council instigated an EU fund for the integration of third-country nationals for the 2007-2013 period based on a proposal from the European Commission. The purpose of the fund was “to provide education, boost proficiency in the language of host countries and ensure migrant access to social security

<sup>599</sup> The European Parliament hosted the Grand Mufti of Syria, Ahmad Badr al-din Hassoun, (15 January, 2008); Asma Jahangir, UN Special Rapporteur on the Freedom of Religion or Belief, (18 June, 2008); Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, Archbishop of Constantinople, (24 September, 2008); Jorge Sampaio, UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilisations, (23 October, 2008); Jonathan Sacks, Chief rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Commonwealth, ((20 November, 2008) and The Dalai Lama, (04 December, 2008).

<sup>600</sup> Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA, OJ. L 328/55. <http://www.eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:328:0055:0058:EN:PDF>

<sup>601</sup> FRA Media Team. <http://www.media4diversity.eu/en/content/fra-welcomes-new-eu-framework-decision-combating-racism-and-xenophobia>

systems”.<sup>602</sup> In November 2008, Barroso assured regional and municipal authorities that the Council would work towards allowing them to directly access the fund, which had previously been administered by national authorities. Earlier in the year, German Interior Minister Wolfgang Schäuble said that, “achieving full integration and ensuring equal opportunities of migrants living in Europe is one of the most important challenges of EU home affairs policy”. He added that “intercultural dialogue is particularly important for ensuring stability and internal security, given the growing Muslim population in many (EU) member states”.<sup>603</sup>

European national governments have not been passive either. Although no longer in office, Azouz Begag was appointed France’s first Minister Delegate for the Promotion of Equal Opportunity in 2005, and a High Authority for the Fight Against Discrimination and for Equal Opportunity was created. In January 2008, in an unprecedented move, Nicolas Sarkozy appointed three Muslim women to his cabinet.<sup>604</sup> The UK created several committees with a mixture of government and Muslim members, to improve dialogue and explore concrete measures to aid integration and the Dutch government launched a comprehensive program for empowerment and integration. France already has a system in place to check on the sources of foreign money used to build mosques and Italy is looking to put a system in place in an attempt to prevent the influence of foreign Islamic groups.<sup>605</sup>

Ultimately “legal protection from discrimination is only one tool for addressing Islamophobia and anti –Muslim prejudice... Where... discrimination is the result of the reproduction and reinforcement of stereotypes and the perpetuation of prejudices about Muslims, then the solution lies in empowering Muslims to challenge and disrupt these discourses”.<sup>606</sup> Empowering requires action and there is evidence of action not only politically by Klausen’s elites but also in the realms of media and

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<sup>602</sup> “Barroso to ease access to integration fund.” <http://www.euractiv.com/en/social/europe/barroso-ease-access-eu-migrant-integration-fund/article-177601>

<sup>603</sup> Ibid.

<sup>604</sup> Rachida Dati was appointed as the Justice Minister, Fadela Amara, undersecretary for urban affairs and Rama Yade as foreign undersecretary for human rights. Although it looks like President Sarkozy will remove Rachida Dati and Rama Yade from his cabinet in June 2009, encouraging them both to stand for the European Parliamentary elections. (UK Telegraph, 28 January, 2009). Accessed 22/03/09 via [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/4374160/President -Nicolas-Sarkozy-to-push-Rama-Yade-out-of-governmetn.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/4374160/President-Nicolas-Sarkozy-to-push-Rama-Yade-out-of-government.html)

<sup>605</sup> Christian Fraser, BBC News, 5 January 2009. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6235451.stm>

<sup>606</sup> Choudhury, “Muslims and Discrimination,” in *European Islam*, 106.

film, theatre and television, and art and journalism. Muslim artists, comedians and journalists are challenging negative discourses by publicly celebrating their culture, ethnicity and unique European identities by finding innovative ways to remain faithful to Islam while embracing western democracy.

### Grassroots Action.

Identity is based on legitimacy, and legitimacy is reinforced through visibility. Visibility of Europe's Muslims, not only in local communities but also in art galleries, in craft and fashion stores, in restaurants, in the media, on the radio and in television programmes may well result in a legitimisation of their role in the multi-cultured patchwork that constitutes Europe. The visibility of Muslims has long been a stumbling block for European governments and citizens alike. The classic example being in relation to the *hijab* in France, where as Cesari writes, the government responded, by passing a law "charged with the protection of individual freedom – including the protection of individual freedom against the individual's will".<sup>607</sup> As reported by the 2007 Gallup World Poll, visibility is still a problem for 62% of the British public who said that minorities should blend in more, whilst 55% of the British public thought that Muslims should not wear veils.<sup>608</sup>

One young Muslim female comedian, Shazia Mirza, challenges these stereotypes and prejudices in Britain through humour. She says audiences are initially shocked to see a Muslim woman wearing the *hijab* on stage but "once people warm to me...they forget about it".<sup>609</sup> Mirza says that by openly joking about suicide bombers she defuses their importance and can dispute fears that every Muslim is a potential terrorist. Another Muslim comedian is Omar Marzouk, who was born in Copenhagen in 1973. Marzouk initially responded to a competition to combat racism organised by the EU in the mid 1990s.<sup>610</sup> He discovered that as a comedian he was able to challenge prejudices and openly challenge European fears of Islam and terrorism whilst presenting a different perspective in a non-threatening manner. Marzouk, who speaks fluent English, Danish and Arabic, is an example of one of Castells' elite (Ch.

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<sup>607</sup> Cesari, 77.

<sup>608</sup> "Beyond Multiculturalism vs. Assimilation", Gallup World Poll, 2007. [www.http://gallup.com/muslimwestfacts/PDF/londonbrieffull041307.pdf](http://gallup.com/muslimwestfacts/PDF/londonbrieffull041307.pdf)

<sup>609</sup> Shazia Mirza, CBMI, 66.

<sup>610</sup> John Tagliabue, "Comedy show plays on Dane's fears of Islam and terrorism," *International Herald Tribune: Europe*. Published 19/08/08. <http://www.iht.com/articles/2008/08/09/europe/journal.php>

3, p. 75) who are able to move easily between two worlds. Recently, for another EU sponsored competition to promote public service programming, Marzouk wrote “The Terrorist Cell”, a television programme that is scheduled to air on Danish Television next year. While poking fun at Islam and terrorism Marzouk also “chides the Danes for avoiding hard questions about immigration – Denmark has some of the toughest anti-immigration laws in Europe – and the country’s role in the Middle East, where it has troops in Iraq and Afghanistan”.<sup>611</sup>

Tariq Ramadan talks of a “silent revolution in Muslim communities in the West” in which “more and more young people and intellectuals are actively looking for a way to live in harmony with their faith” as they construct a European Islam at the grassroots.<sup>612</sup> An Islam developed through engaging in an authentic dialogue between equals. While dressed in Western culture and rooted in Western society, it nevertheless remains faithful to the principles of Islam. Cesari also argues that latter generations of immigrants are developing de-ethnicised European-Muslim identities relative to their country of residence.<sup>613</sup> Using humour and art to express their identities, is popular with a number of artists and writers, like Sardar, who is able to use humour to challenge prejudice and change perceptions of Muslims by presenting an ‘insiders’ view. Sardar, born in a rural village in the Punjab, on the Pakistani-Indian border, emigrated with his family to London where he found that “being and becoming a Muslim, shaping an identity, was a contested arena wherever I lived, in London or in a divided India ‘back home’”.<sup>614</sup> On his quest to discover “how to be a Muslim...in the better world...[his] generation was committed to creating”<sup>615</sup> he encounters “Men with rigid certainty in their eyes”<sup>616</sup> coming at him from all directions. His humorous account of one Muslim’s search to belong dispels the notion of Islam as homogenous and immutable, positing instead that, like identity, “the Muslim paradise is not a place of arrival but a way of travelling”.<sup>617</sup>

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<sup>611</sup> Tagliaube, “Comedy show plays on Dane’s fears of Islam and Terrorism”.

<sup>612</sup> Ramadan, *Western Muslims*, 4.

<sup>613</sup> Cesari, 178.

<sup>614</sup> Sardar, *Desperately Seeking*, 22.

<sup>615</sup> Sardar, *Desperately Seeking*, 39.

<sup>616</sup> Sardar, *Desperately Seeking*, 71.

<sup>617</sup> Sardar, *Desperately Seeking*, 339.

Gary Younge, a black British writer also uses humour to explore real issues concerning the question of identity:

Ladies and gentlemen, we are about to land at Heathrow. Please stow away your tray tables, put your seats in the upright position, ensure your seatbelt is securely fastened and that your racial identity is put away carefully in a safe place as otherwise it may well pop out and cause you injury. Gary Younge.<sup>618</sup>

In October (2007), during Ramadan, another young Muslim artist in Germany, Melih Kesmen, began to print eye-catching messages on clothing in an attempt to dispel rising prejudice against Muslims after the publication of the Denmark Cartoons.<sup>619</sup> Kesmen decided to promote communication through curiosity by spreading peaceful messages through “styleislam” which involves printing pictures with words like “drop love not bombs”, “*hijab* supporter” or “go *halal*”. Kesmen says the motifs facilitate dialogue between Muslim and non-Muslim, and remind Muslims that it is okay to inject humour into religious issues.

Klausen noted in her interviews of Muslim elites that embryonic ‘national faith-based umbrella groups’ who support integration are focussing on political participation at a national level.<sup>620</sup> Although at present Muslims are underrepresented in the EU’s national parliaments and institutions, as well as in civic society, there are indications that European Muslims are becoming increasingly active at a local political level. In local elections in The Netherlands in May 2006, “a record number of Muslims went to the polls and elected immigrants to various city councils, demonstrating that immigrants are seeking change through healthy democratic means”.<sup>621</sup> Kepel too posits that the time is ripe for the “hybridization of two distinct cultures” and that a new generation of Muslim thinkers are emerging who will present a modern face of Islam.<sup>622</sup> In Milan, 2Gs (second-generation Muslim immigrants) seek to bridge the gap between cultures through “Yalla Italia” (Let’s Go, Italy), a monthly publication started in May 2007.<sup>623</sup> The magazine is directed at the 700,000 2Gs in Italy who are

<sup>618</sup> No Place Like Home, (London: Picador, 2000) cited in CBMI, 27.

<sup>619</sup> World Bulletin News Desk. [http://www.worldbulletin.net/news\\_print.php?id=30850](http://www.worldbulletin.net/news_print.php?id=30850)

<sup>620</sup> Klausen, 28.

<sup>621</sup> Daniel Fried, “Overview of Islamist Extremism in Europe,” Testimony before the Subcommittee on European Affairs of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/64192.htm>

<sup>622</sup> Kepel, 294 and 295 respectively.

<sup>623</sup> Povoledo, “Muslims Seek to Build a Future in Italy”.

juggling Italian, European and Muslim identities, and for Italians who have little knowledge of a culture that virtually didn't exist in Italy two decades ago. As Ouejdane Mejri (a teacher of information technology at Milan Polytechnic) says, 'Yalla Italia' shows Italians another perspective of Muslim life:

Immigrants are not just people who wash ashore on a beach. We pay taxes, participate in society, strive to integrate. We are the future of Italy, and we want to be protagonists of that future.<sup>624</sup>

The importance of art and the artist as mediums for crossing cultural barriers was emphasised by the Brussels speakers and EYID devoted considerable effort to promoting art, drama, music, film and photographic exhibitions throughout the EU. This work is continuing in the work of commercial film producers as well with a French film, *The Class* winning the prestigious Palme d'Or at Cannes in 2008. The film was shot at the Françoise Dolto High School in the 20<sup>th</sup> arrondissement in Paris, one of the city's most culturally mixed suburbs. *The Class* "addresses the current concern over the integration of immigrant students into a crumbling school system and ties into the ongoing debate over what exactly constitutes 'Frenchness'".<sup>625</sup> The real life actors in the movie reject Sarkozy's derogatory comments regarding immigrants in their neighbourhood during the 2007 riots by presenting immigrant communities in a more positive light.

Architecture is another medium through which prejudices are being challenged. Previously the building of mosques in old warehouses and garages strengthened the perception of Islam as a 'secondary religion' to Muslims, while also reinforcing the perception of "Muslim communities as a part of shadow society".<sup>626</sup> Joël Privot, architect and co-founder of Expert-is, a consultation agency specialising in the construction of mosques, says that, "wherever Islam has settled in history [outside Europe], new Islamic architecture had developed related to the local context...[but] this architectural contextualisation had not taken place in Europe."<sup>627</sup> However, this is changing, evidenced by a new mosque in Belgium, which dispels traditional fears of

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<sup>624</sup> Poveledo, "Muslims Seek to Build a Future in Italy".

<sup>625</sup> Elizabeth Day, 'From France, A Classy Act'. *The Christchurch Press*, 21 March, 2009, C7.

<sup>626</sup> Imam Pallavicini, CSC Conference 29 May 2008. [www.cec-kek.org/content/Projectislam.shtml](http://www.cec-kek.org/content/Projectislam.shtml)

<sup>627</sup> Joël Privot, CSC Conference 29 May 2008. [www.cec-kek.org/content/Projectislam.shtml](http://www.cec-kek.org/content/Projectislam.shtml)

Islam by combining high architectural and environmental standards, whilst creating spaces, which are open and welcoming for the residents of the entire neighbourhood.

### Conclusion.

Thus, whispers of change are evident across the EU, in the institutions as well as in the streets. There are signs of a political and civil commitment to moving beyond 'mere tolerance' towards a united future. Despite economic and social challenges, the EU continues to work towards harmonising practices in relation to integration, and in deterring racism and discrimination. Though political change is slow there are indications of 'political will' and despite entrenched Islamophobia in some parts of the EU, many people accept that Muslims are an integral part of Europe and have much to offer culturally, and as consumers, workers and citizens.

With its strengths and weaknesses, Europe is gradually taking shape in an increasingly complex world - but it's still looking for a vision, for its "founding myth". This search for an identity is at least proof that it is becoming a reality.  
Professor Pierre Hassner.<sup>628</sup>

For over three decades, Europe's Muslims have lived largely in the shadows but in this, the 21<sup>st</sup> century, through both positive and negative actions, they are seeking a more visible role. Young educated Muslims are using their artistic and comedic skills to challenge old stereotypes and promote dialogue. Changes to the European landscape both figuratively and literally signify the emergence of an embryonic European Muslim identity, which, given the chance, could well be compatible with a broader pan-European identity. The EYID provided an opportunity to focus on the importance of Europe's cultural diversity on a number of levels and endorsed the same concerns that academics have raised in relation to the integration of Muslim immigrants in recent years. Continued emphasis on the value of these immigrants and ethnic diversity in general can only benefit the integration process and the EU's search for a 'social Europe'. Equally importantly, if intercultural dialogue is effective as a paradigm for peace between Islam and contemporary Europe, its influence will also benefit the EU's relationship with its Mediterranean neighbours and the global West/East discourse.

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<sup>628</sup> Professor of Political Science at the Centre for International Study and Research in Paris. Interview 17/04/01 [www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)



In terms of the Euro-Muslim chronicle, it seems that one of the areas suffering from a lack of research is that of analysing the positive achievements of Muslims in Europe. Consequently, further research including interviews at the grassroots level as well as with elites and stakeholders, could prove insightful and provide valuable resources with which to balance the ‘integration narrative’.

Ironically, twelve thousand miles away, in a former European colony, a different yet similar minority/majority debate encompassing a similar timeframe has been taking place. If one changes the ethnicities of the minority (Maori to Muslim) and majority (New Zealand to the EU), a quote in a local magazine in New Zealand could be equally applicable to the European Union:

What’s good for Maori is good for New Zealand. Maori can’t sit in a vacuum doing their own thing and expect New Zealand to embrace it. And New Zealand cannot go forward as a nation without taking Maori with it”. (Hon. Dr. Pita Sharples, Minister of Maori Affairs).<sup>629</sup>

Recognising the significant historical, cultural and economical wealth that Europe’s Muslims contribute to the EU, and working towards providing economic and social parity can only benefit Europe, for the European Union cannot go forward without its Muslim population.

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<sup>629</sup> Caroline Courtney, “Maori in the Middle” in *North and South*, Issue 267, June 2008.

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